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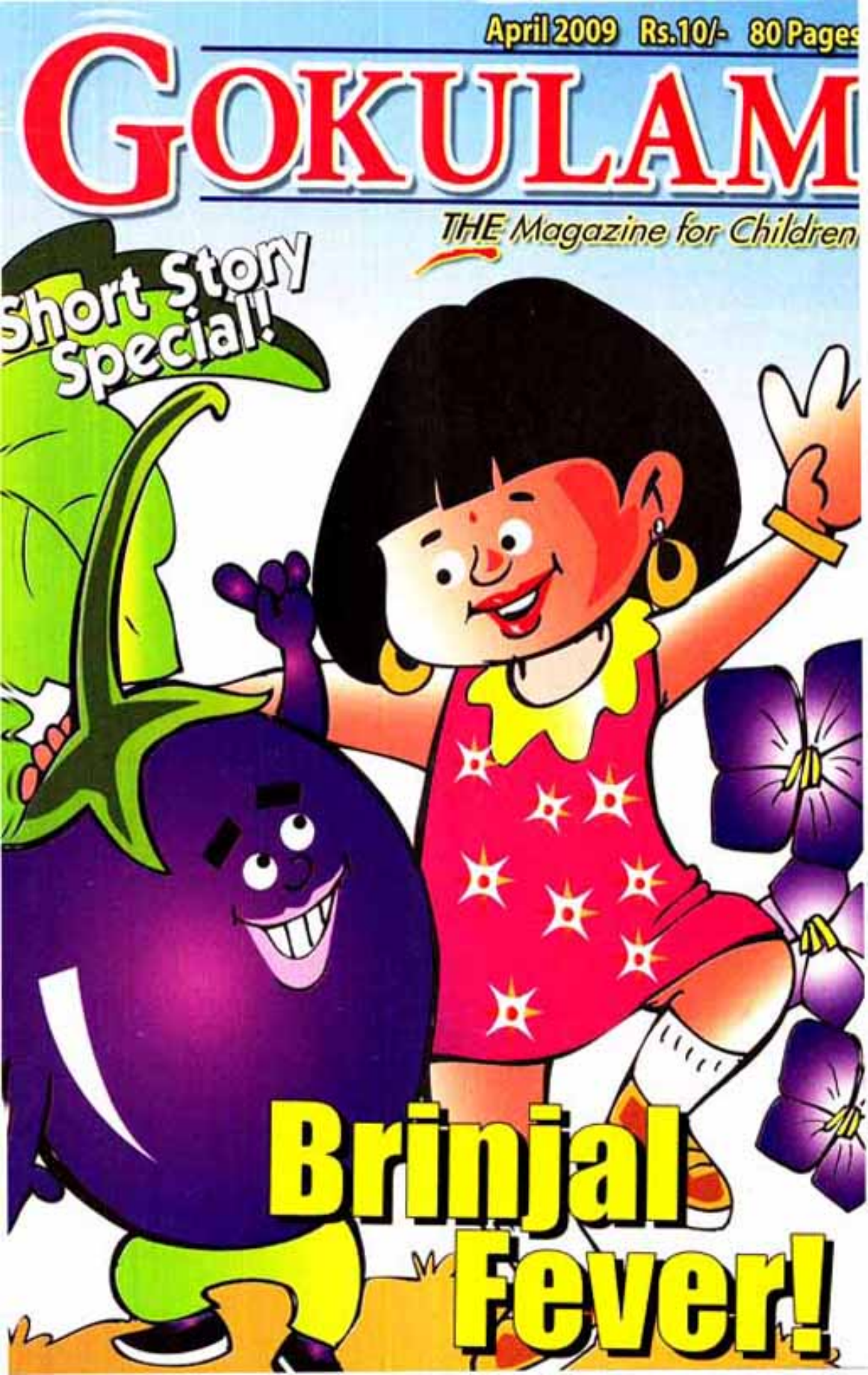
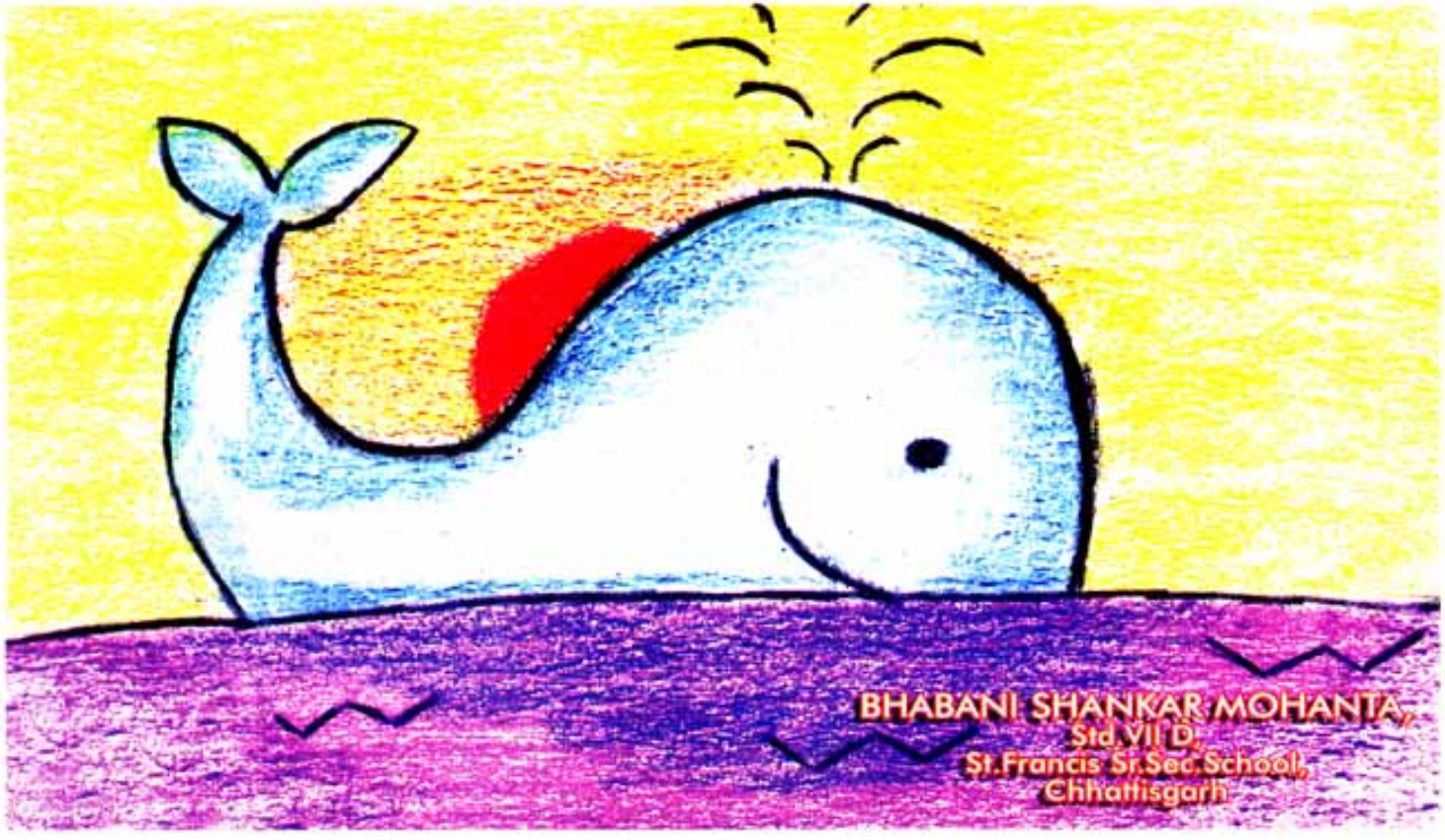
GOKULAM

THE Magazine for Children

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GOKULAM

THE Magazine for Children

April 2009 Vol.XXI, No.10

KALKI GROUP HOUSE of QUALITY

Of all created things the loveliest.
And most divine are children.
-William Canton

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KALKI GROUP
HOUSE of QUALITY

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THE Magazine for Children

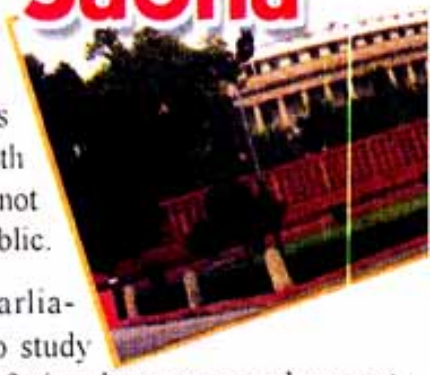
Dear Reader,

Once again it's election time. Citizens of India have to elect their representatives for the 15th Lok Sabha. Party alliances are breaking up and regrouping, here, there and everywhere! Who will be the next Prime Minister is the million dollar question today. There is a lot of excitement in the air.

However the intelligent voter is not very enthusiastic He has seen the LokSabha in action in the recent past. Most of the time was taken up by slogan shouting, walkouts, disruption of proceedings and consequent adjournment of business.

The Lok Sabha speaker remarked that the M P.s don't deserve a single paisa of tax payers' money. Though he apologised later for his angry statement the truth of his utterance was not lost to the general public.

Election to the 15th Lok Sabha



Members of Parliament are expected to study the various problems facing the country and suggest solutions. They should also study all the laws to be enacted and taxes to be levied and offer constructive criticism. When various views are expressed there is a debate, out of which truth emerges. The party in power accepts such amendments as are necessary to improve the laws and to modify the levy of taxes. All this results in better governance.

Let us hope that the 15th Lok Sabha will have enlightened members who will be sincere to the people who elected them and serve the country better.

- Editor

Humour

LAUGH AWAY!

Teacher: What is sportsmanship?

Student: I think it is a ship sir, and it is owned by a sportsman.

Teacher: How long did Akbar rule..?

Student: From page 14 to 21 of our history text book, sir!

- Mohit Kumar, Banda, U.P.

Which bow is impossible to tie?

Ans: Rainbow!

- B.L.V.Lohith Kumar, Age: 12, Little Rose High School, Chitoor, Andhra Pradesh.

What happens when two acids collide?

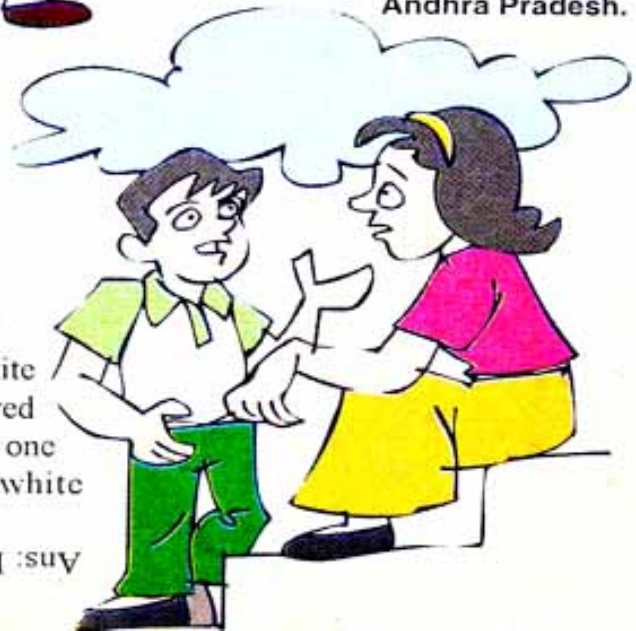
Ans: An 'acid' dent!

What has a mouth but no teeth?

Ans: A river!

There is a blue house, a white house and a red house. The red house is on the left and the blue one on the right. Where is the white house?

Ans: In Washington D.C.!



Healthy and tasty, mother called it. Preposterous, thought April D'Souza. Guessed it! Yes it was those purple, plump, brinjals! Some liked them, many disliked them. April just hated them!

April D'Souza studied in the 7th grade at Ocean Bay School, Goa. There she learnt to love her school, parents, friends, nature, fruits, and vegetables. Oops!! she disliked only brinjals.

April could very well remember that she hated brinjals from her very first sight. She had something called 'brinjal fever' – pretty much like the exam fever that many of her friends had! Her mother was quite exasperated with her. She tried her level best to make her daughter taste brinjals at least once. But April always wriggled out of it!

One day, after having her lunch (and of course skipping the brinjal fry), she jumped out into her little garden.

April loved gardening. She and her father shared a special bond with each other that allowed them to work endless hours in the garden, nurturing the young plants and safeguarding the big ones. Every month they yielded a good supply of tomatoes and greens from their little garden.

April was very eager to know what her father had in his broad palms. "Brinjal seeds," her father

replied. He also told her that brinjal seeds were fun to grow. But April was aghast. She stared at the seeds her father was holding in his muddy hands. "Here, you plant them and raise the plants yourself," said father and made April cup her hands to hold the teeny weeny seeds.

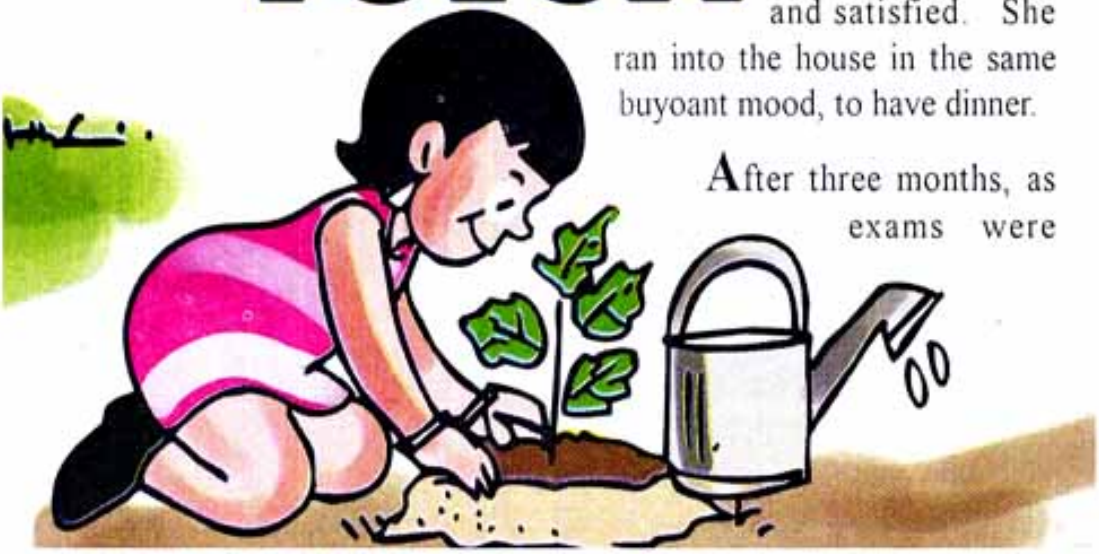
April truly wished she did not have to grow *brinjal,* of all things! She was also anxious because, she had been asked to take care of a patch in the garden, all by herself. For the first time, she would be working on her own.

Brinjal Fever!

Her father had allotted her a small rectangular piece of land, where tomatoes had been planted the previous season. The tomatoes had even won the HEALTHY VEGGIE PRIZE. April remembered how their neighbours came pouring in to see the prize winning tomatoes!

It was almost a week since April had turned the soil over in her garden and spread the brinjal seeds uniformly. She had made sure that they were fed with enough water and sunshine. Three weeks after the seeds were sown, tiny tendrils of bright radiant green shot up. April was excited to see her hard work fetching good results. It was like passing an important examination! She felt really happy and satisfied. She ran into the house in the same buyoant mood, to have dinner.

After three months, as exams were



nearing, April got busy and was holed up in her room with a lot of assignments. So it was difficult to tend the brinjals every day. But father was nice enough to take charge from her. One day he announced that there were violet flowers starting to bloom all over her patch, and most likely they

would produce brinjals within a week. April screamed with excitement and plonked a huge kiss on Pappa's cheeks!

April's exams over, the D'Souza family sat down for lunch in their large dining room. April could smell something delicious and familiar. Her mother opened a casserole and April saw a plump, purple side dish with spicy masala on it. She served herself and tasted it. ' Mmmm!! Delicious!!' April felt. She looked up inquisitively at her mother, and licked her fingers with satisfaction. Mom smiled at her and pointed through the window that overlooked their garden.

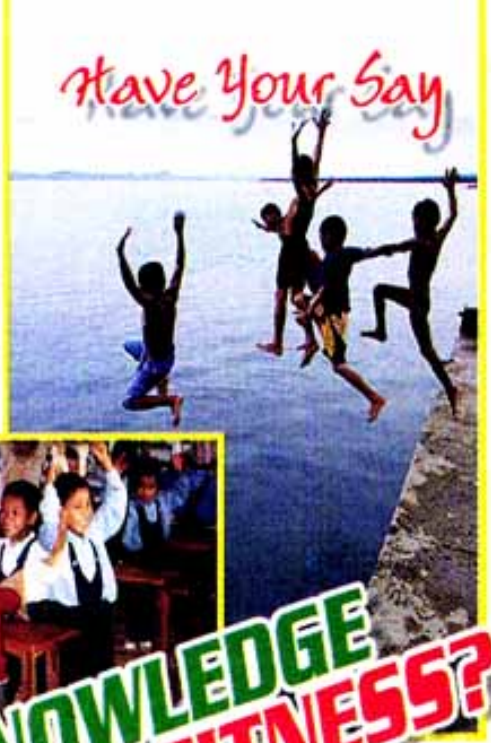
April was flabbergasted. They were the brinjals they plucked the day before. Mrs. and Mr. D'Souza felt really happy to see their daughter eating brinjals and said, "The recipe includes hard work and patience too!"

The annual exams were over and it was vacation time. April had visited her friend Jerry's house. His mother brought in a dish of pickled tomatoes for lunch. Jerry shouted "Oh god, not tomatoes again." April touched his mother's hand gently and said with a smile, "I think I know of something you can do here Aunty."

- Meenakshi Srihari
Std. VII B,
SBKV Matric Hr. Sec. School,
Coimbatore

Cover design: **Pillai**

Have Your Say



KNOWLEDGE or FITNESS?

Knowledge is super power. For example, if a bus is coming behind you, you must have the sense to move aside. Instead, if you stay put and say, "I am strong and fit and will not move from here!" there will be disaster!

Man discovered gravity, the telephone, television, and many other marvels only because of knowledge and not because of fitness. Of course, fitness is important too. But this does not mean that we can keep on playing or exercising all the time to keep fit.

A person may be very poor but can still rise to high positions if he has knowledge. But the same cannot be said of fitness. It cannot fetch you a job or a high position unless it is accompanied by knowledge. A poor man may be able to acquire some fitness, but if he is jobless, he will soon lose his fitness simply because he won't have enough to eat!

A man with knowledge may at first find only an ordinary job – say as a helper in a restaurant. But once he has made some money, he will be able to find a better job which utilizes the knowledge he has. He can, with some effort become rich.

So, it would be wise for us not to dislike school or bunk school. We should try hard and get good marks and develop our knowledge so that our bright future is ensured. Alongside, play some outdoor games to stay fit.

- S.Swarnalakshmi, Std VII,
Sri Akhilandeswari Vidyalaya,
Trichy.

• Creating History

Muscle Power & Money Power

In the Railway budget Lalu Prasad Yadav reduced passenger fares by 2% there was no change in freight rates. On the same day the Corammandel Express from Calcutta, heading for Chennai, derailed! Fifteen passengers were killed and over a hundred injured. It is not enough if the Railways make money. Travel must be made safe.

The interim General Budget was obviously prepared with Lok Sabha election in view. There were no fresh taxes or concessions. The fiscal deficit which is the expense over income is 3,32,835 crores of rupees! In other words, the government is overspending to that extent! Supposing, dear reader, your father earns 2.5 lakhs per year but spends 3 lakhs, he has to borrow Rs.50,000 and repay it with interest. That is exactly what the government is doing! Unfortunately it is the poor tax payer who has to bear all the burden, in the form of additional taxes and inflation resulting in price rise!

Elections are to be held for the Parliament from April 16 to May 13! In the U.S.A, the whole exercise is over in just a day, whereas we have to spread it over nearly a month. The reason is that troops have to be shifted from one region to another to maintain peace. They have to tackle possible terrorist attacks and political goondaism! Another sad aspect of the election is the huge amount of money to be spent officially by the government and unofficially by the political parties. The total is expected

to be around 10,000 crores! Muscle power and money power seem to make a mockery of our democracy.

The Srilankan cricket team was attacked by terrorists in the Pakistan city of Lahore. Fortunately all the players are safe though a few were injured and a couple of them needed surgery. The team cancelled the tour and returned home. All the terrorists escaped while six policemen guarding the cricketers lost their lives.

• Makes India Proud

• Safety concerns

• Enormous deficit

'Slumdog Millionaire' a small budget British film shot in the slums of Mumbai won eight Oscars! Music composer A.R.Rahman became the first Indian to win two Oscars, one for Best Original Score and another for best original song. Keralite Resul Pookutty won the award for Sound Mixing but shares the award with two other non-Indians.

Gandhiji's personal belongings like spectacles, sandals, pocketwatch etc., Came up for auction in New York. Government of India brought pressure on the owner James Otis to withdraw from the auction. He was willing but the auction house would not agree and wanted him to stand by his commitment. Fortunately, Vijay Mallya won the bid and paid $ 1.8 million to buy the memorabilia for the country. However many people feel sorry that articles linked to Gandhiji had to be purchased by a liquor baron!

India won its first series is New Zealand 3-0 with one more ODI yet to be played. If this writing of history was not enough, Sehwag in the third match, hit the fastest ODI hundred by any Indian. He faced just 60 balls to score his ton and was an unconqered 74 ball 125 hero at the end of the game. Hats off to him. o

R.Pavithra
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Paramita Sen Mazunder
Std. IV, Delhi Public School,
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Junior Gallery

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Senior Secondary School,
Chennai.

R.Harishanjana,
Std. III, Suguna PIP School,
Coimbatore.

Nibedita Sahu,
Std. II, St. Anne's School,
Orissa.

A Jolly Story

Booty Treats!

It was a very cold afternoon. Cheryl was lying on her bed feeling extremely bored. She was suffering from high fever and was advised complete rest by the doctor. She felt quite drowsy and tried to sleep.

Suddenly, she saw something strange happening. A shoe was walking towards a pair of slippers and all the three were talking about a boot who passed them by and were happily making plans to dine out.

Wait!!!!! What was she seeing? What was she hearing? Yes no doubt, she was seeing shoes going about, and slippers planning to go to a restaurant.. She was taken aback. To her surprise, a large boot walked up to her and asked, "Who are you?" Still in a daze and quite unable to believe the things going on, Cheryl just could not speak! She barely managed to ask back, "Who are you?"

"Oh! Silly of me! I am Mr. Boots," replied the big boot. "And what is your name?" He asked her. She said, "I am Cheryl, and this place?"... She looked inquiringly at him. Mr. Boots replied, "This is **Boot Land"** and asked Cheryl if she would care to join them for dinner.

"Oh! Yes," she immediately replied.

Mr. Boots opened a door leading to a flight of stairs and went in. Cheryl followed. They went on till they came to a huge slide. " Oh!" She exclaimed. "There are no stairs?"

"No, this is the fun part," replied Mr. Boots. He jumped on to the big slide and disappeared. Cheryl also followed him, happily enjoying it as she slid down. As she landed, she saw Mr. Boots and the slippers sitting at a table, smiling politely.

As soon as she joined them, she started looking at the menu card quite amazed. A small attractive pink slipper took their order. Cheryl soon began tasting her cup of **Milano shoe coffee, and Booty treats**! The shoe

coffee was most delicious and the booty treats most exciting.

Suddenly, Cheryl's mother called. Cheryl would you like to have a cup of coffee and biscuits? Cheryl jumped out of her bed and went running - away from her fantastic dream and towards a real cup of steaming coffee! Ugh! The Booty Treats from her dream did not seem so appetizing now!

- Anoushka Gandhi,
Std. V,
Delhi Public School (South)

The Story of Shakuntala

Ujjain, an ancient centre of art and learning was a place where a classic writer was born. This writer was none other than Kalidasa. Kalidasa's works, 'Meghdut', 'Ritusamharn', 'Raghuvamsa' and many more are still remembered. The most famous work of his is 'Abhijnanashaakuntalam', or simply, 'The story of Shakuntala'. This story revolves around a beautiful maiden, king Dushyanta and their ageless love.

"A deer leaped into the clearing. He stood poised and quivering, eyes darting nervously this way and that. Then he bounded towards a clump of trees, melting away into the green haze, as dreams melt from sleeping eyes with the first light of dawn. But this is no dream; this is the story of Shakuntala and Dushyanta." Thus begins the heart rending story.

Dushyanta comes to a forest situated on the banks of river Malini. He is there to hunt. An ascetic belonging to sage Kanva's hermitage stops Dushyanta from hunting in the forest. Dushyanta apologizes to the ascetic. The ascetic blesses Dushyanta with a son who will rule the world. Dushyanta then enters the hermitage of sage Kanva to rest for a while. He hears female voices and he is surprised! He hides behind a bush and after a while, three young women appear. They are plucking flowers along the way. Captivated, Dushyanta emerges from his hiding place. At the sight of the stranger, the first two girls cease their chatter. The third girl glances up from her task of watering the plants and shrubs and blushes. Dushyanta asks the maidens who they are. They reply by introducing the blushing maiden as Shakuntala. However, Dushyanta introduces himself as one of the king's loyal men! Hearing this,

Priyamvada and Anasuya invite Dushyanta to stay overnight in the hermitage since the king was not used to camping in the forest at night.

This raises Shakuntala's hopes of him becoming more acquainted to her. But Dushyanta refuses their invitation and insists on staying in the royal camp set up close to the hermitage. Hearing this, Shakuntala is disappointed.

In his tent Dushyanta speaks to himself and asks himself whether Shakuntala is in love with him or not

or whether Shakuntala will ever be his. The next morning, two disciples of Kanva arrive at Dushyanta's tent and request him to thwart the demons spoiling the spiritual rites of the hermitage. Dushyanta agrees and heads towards the hermitage. Meanwhile, all at the hermitage are eagerly waiting for the king to arrive. That is everybody including Shakuntala! When Shakuntala sees that the handsome man that she had met the day before is king Dushyanta, she is totally flabbergasted. Overcome with these emotions she explains her feelings to Priyamvada and Anasuya. However, she is overheard by Dushyanta and he is so happy that he draws Shakuntala into his embrace and slips a ring into her delicate fingers. They get married secretly and live happily together for a few days until a message from the capital forces the king to bid farewell to Shakuntala and leave the forest. He leaves her, taking away her happiness and cheer with him. The discovery that she is pregnant restores her spirits but not for long. When days and weeks and even months pass without any message from her husband, her heart grows heavy again ...

The rest of the story is based on how Shakuntala is cursed by sage Durvasa, encouraged by Kanva, Priyamvada and Anasuya to regain her beloved one and how she is successful in reuniting with her husband.

The beautiful story of Shakuntala has inspired directors, producers and writers by the dozen and is still being taken as a story for plays, dramas and skits be it in schools, colleges, organizations or cultural programs. The thing I like most about this book is the usage of vast vocabulary and a whole lot of proverbs and literary devices. This book is available in various languages in all leading book stores. When read once, it attracts you to read it time and again

- Surya Harikrishnan, Std. VII, Sindhi High School, K.K Road, Bengaluru

GOKULAM

THE Magazine for Children

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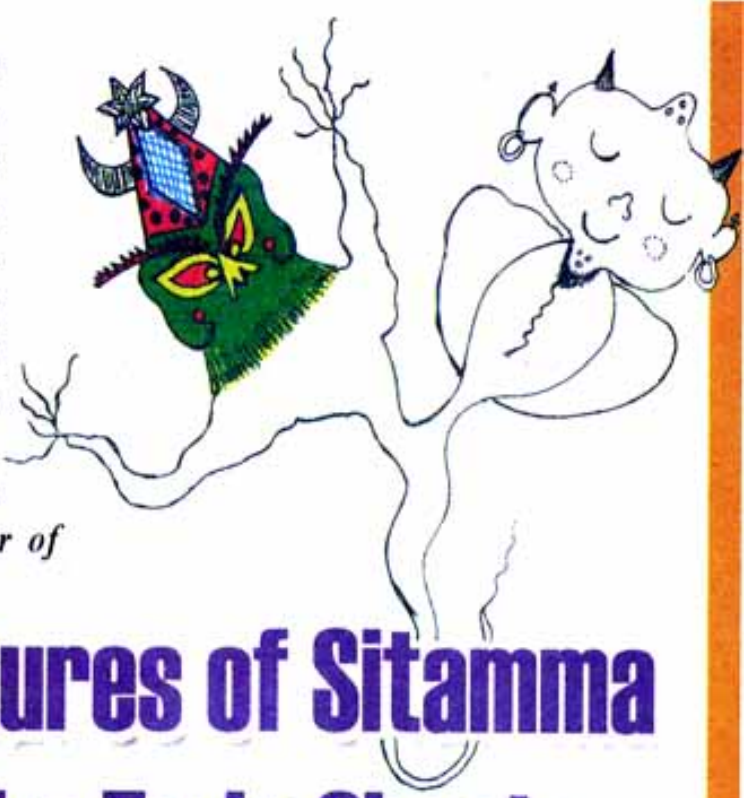
Damar Baba the evil sorcerer has promised to release Sitamma and the two rowdy ghosts Kurali-Gnyamali from his clutches if they find answers to two questions.

(1) Was he the real or foster father of Sitamma?



Adventures of Sitamma and the Twin Ghosts

• Damar Baba

(2) And were the ghosts Kurali-Gnyamali (who had two heads but only one common tail) one ghost or two ghosts?

Will Sitamma and the ghost(s) escape the dangers of their missions long enough to find the answers and be freed? Read on-

Episode : I

Voyage to Vidham Mountains

"Kurali-Gnyamali come on down," Sitamma hollered up a burnt tree that was once lush and fruit bearing. She hated doing this. She felt like a dog whenever she had to bark up the tree.

Ever since the ghosts made the tree their home, the poor

Story & Illustrations :
JAYA MADHAVAN

tree began losing its leaves and beauty. Before long everyone in the village knew that the bald and bitter tree was haunted, for whoever passed under it got the shivers and loosies.

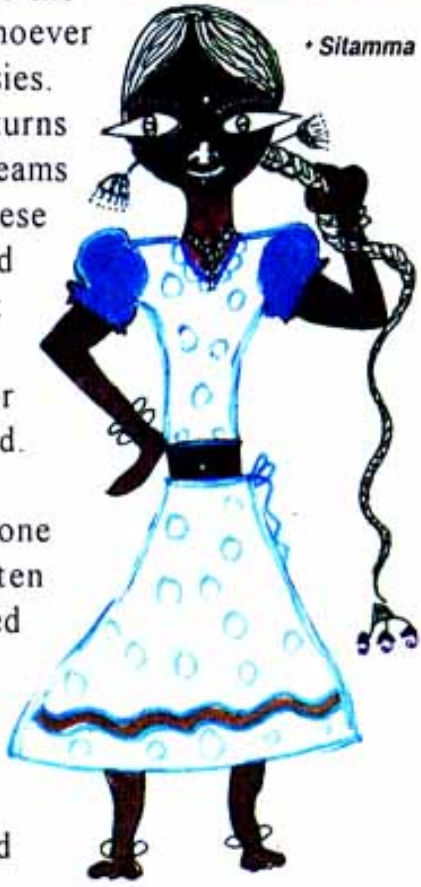
"These ghosts. Whatever they touch turns to dust. And here is Damar Baba who dreams of turning even dust into gold using these ghosts," muttered Sitamma when a loud screech was heard so close to her ear that she nearly collapsed.

"How do you know if we are ghost or ghosts?" Kurali-Gnyamali (KG) screamed.

"Oh! Bother." retorted Sitamma.

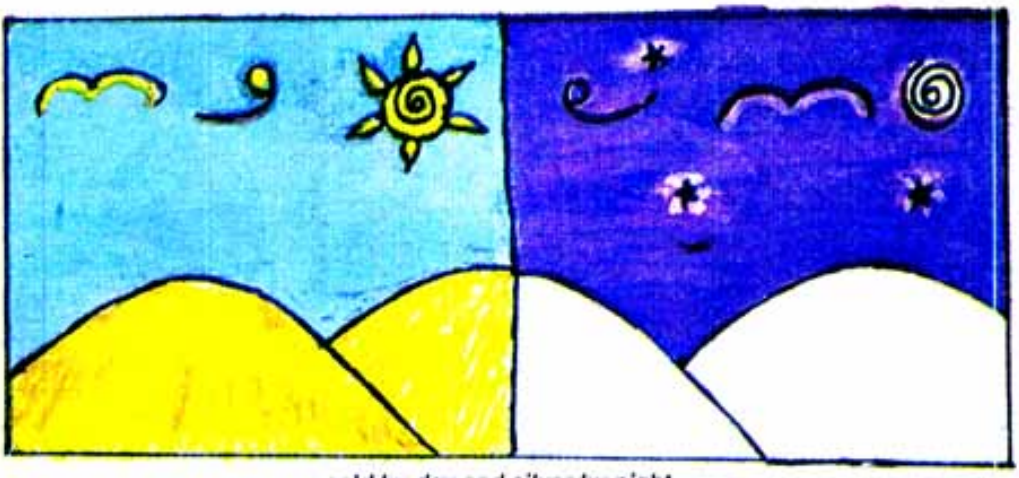
"We are one, because we have only one common body, just as Ravana with ten heads was still one person only," shouted Kurali.

"We are two, because we have two heads. Haven't you heard of Siamese twins who are separated by surgery and made into two people?" retorted Gnyamali.



• Sitamma

• Whoever passed under it got the shivers and loosies.



• gold by day and silver by night

Irritated with their bickering, Sitamma drew out her long plait and lashed it at the ghosts, using it like a whip. Her long tresses were both, her crowning glory and effective weapon.

"It burns, it burns", they wailed and immediately added, "What is our task for the day and what our guise is?"

The grumpy down-turned lips on the mask got plastered into Kurali.

"You Kurali will be grumpy and you Gnyamali will be Happy," said Sitamma handing out the masks.

"Aw! So boring," said the ghosts. Kurali wore the mask and the grumpy down-turned lips on the mask got plastered into Kurali as grumpy mood while the happy smile turned into a wider and happier smile on Gnyamali's face. Both immediately hated each other.

"Damar Baba cleverly fixes guises that are opposed to each other to ensure that your two heads are continually at loggerheads," Sitamma remarked wryly.

"Cat-mouse, foolish-clever, lion-deer. All this so that we never see eye to eye and pause to find the answer to our question," sighed Kurali-Gnyamali. "With that magical drum of his, Damar Baba has seized all our ghostly powers and extracted it into these masks. He only has to beat his drum once for our heads to reel like creeper caught in a cartwheel. But when we wear his masks we do get back some

power," Kurali said.

"But what is the point. We turn into foes when we wear his masks," Gnyamali added.

Her long tresses were both, her crowning glory and effective weapon.

"Well, that is Baba for you. Clever and dangerous. He has promised to let me go too, if I manage to find out if he is my real father or not. How does one do that?" wondered Sitamma and added, "But before we think of our freedom, we have some errands to run for him."

"You call the dangerous missions *errands*?" asked KG.

"He has asked us to go to the Vidham Mountains that shine like gold by the day and silver by the night and bring back the alluvial waters gathered at its bottom, " she said.

"Child's play," shrugged KG, inspecting their new masks.

"Heh-heh! Nice try. When I say bottom it means we have to get inside the Vidham mountain through a cave (if any), reach its base and collect the water in a cup fashioned from vilva leaves from the temple of Bhairava at vilvadwipa, bound by two hairs from the tail of a horse called Panchami and return via what is called the "warrior route" and...."

"Hey wait! Is this one mission or multi-mission?"

shouted KG exasperated.

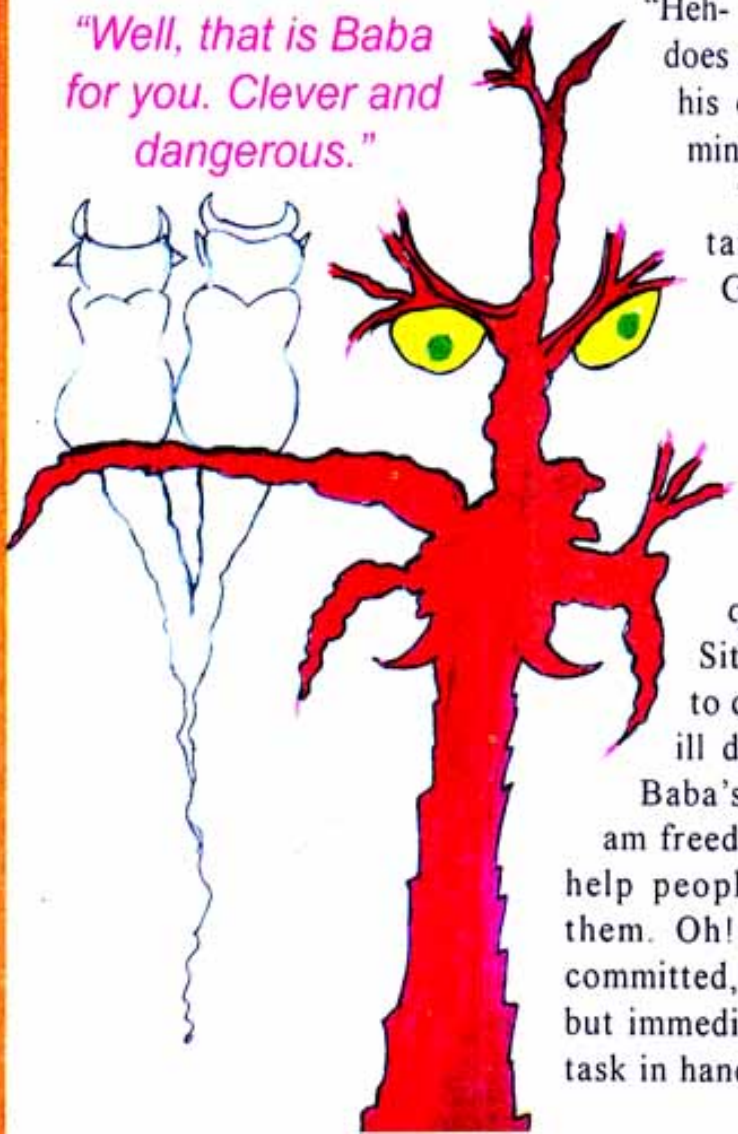
"Alright! To tell you the truth, I caught Damar Baba in a merciful mood yesterday. I begged him to free us. He said the answers to our questions lay in this mission. If we returned with the waters and the answers he would surely set us free. We must fulfill this mission and start a fresh life," said Sitamma.

"Yes. Yes. Infact I want to make it big in life. My ambition is to haunt a huge mansion instead of this spindly tree," said Kurali.

"You haunt a mansion if you wish, I want to teach language. I shall possess people and make them talk in Telugu, Malayalam, English and Hindi also. I want to spread these four languages in remote villages of Tamil Nadu as a service to the....." said Gnyamali, when Kurali cut in "Heh- heh, big social worker, does not even have a tail of his own. Constantly uses mine."

"How dare you? This tail is mine...," began Gnyamali.

"You both are playing into Damar Baba's hands by continuously fighting. How will we ever find the answer to our questions this way?" Sitamma cried. "I want to compensate for all the ill deeds I have done as Baba's apprentice. When I am freed, I shall find ways to help people, be of service to them. Oh! The sins, we have committed," Sitamma said sadly, but immediately returned to the task in hand.



"Baba believes that the alluvial water when sprinkled on any object has the power to turn it to gold. You can imagine how secretive and guarded the source to this magical water is going to be," said Sitamma grimly.

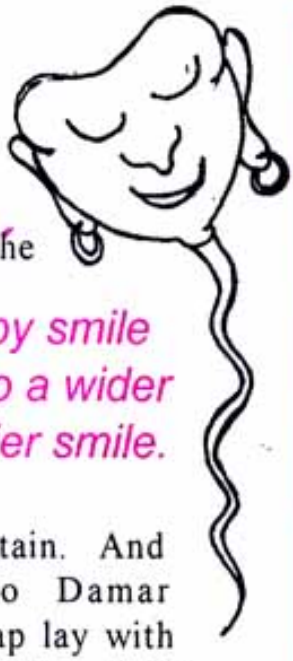
"Hmmm. Why does Damar Baba need so much gold?" asked KG.

"If I know him, he dreams of ousting the king of Vidham belt in a coup. Once he has the power to change everything to gold, he can win any number of men, army and supporters with gold and money. There are but few, who believe in values, integrity....."

"Don't say that. I believe in values and integrity. I love them. They really taste good. Where did we last have it dear?" Kurali asked Gnyamali.

"I had mine with rasam and appalam at Chittu's house. She was such an excellent cook. Pity I had to have her for dessert," said Gnyamali wiping his tears.

"You stupid ghosts!" Sitamma yelled. She began pacing. She needed these two insufferable ghosts to fulfill this mission and win her freedom. The first step was to get a map of the route to the Vidham Mountain. And according to Damar Baba, that map lay with Vanithai, the high priestess of the Shakti temple in the village, a lady of supreme beauty, intelligence and goodness, a godly woman who hated the very sight of Damar Baba.



The happy smile turned into a wider and happier smile.

"We need to get the map to the mountain from Vanithai first," said Sitamma ruefully.

"Vanithai that high priestess who has ghosts for breakfast, ghouls for lunch and goblins in between for brunch? Thank you very much," said KG and flew away.

Sitamma knew just the method for bringing the ghosts right back.

(To be continued)

Answer: 1. Fruit on the tree, 2. Bird, 3. Bird's eye, 4. Flower, 5. Grass, 6. Leaf

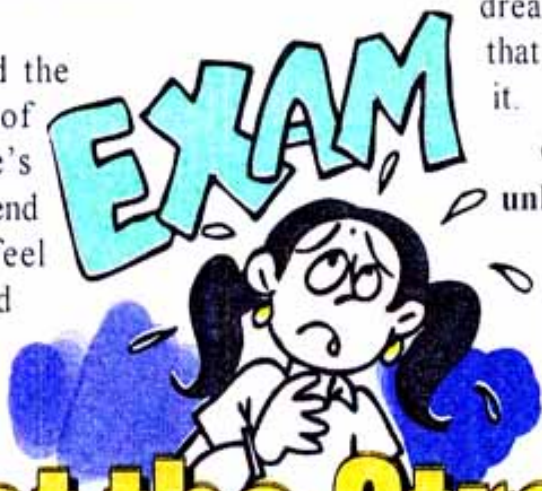
FIND TWO DIFFERENCES

Beat the Stress!

Shital Ravi

Exams are just round the corner and all you students out there must be preparing hard. It's the time of the year when a flurry of activity happens: Reading textbooks, answering the questions asked in the workbooks and textbooks, solving questions papers, discussing with teachers, parents and friends to get a better understanding of some topic and well.... the list goes on.

All this and the importance of exams in one's academic life tend to make us feel tense and apprehensive before our approaching exams as well as during them. Some level of stress in fact is good and that makes us prepare thoroughly and do well in the exams. But when this tension goes out of hands it can create a big problem for the student. An excess of it can paralyze the student with fear and drastically hit one's marks.



There can be various reasons why exam anxiety can go out of hands.

Causes of exam anxiety:

- **Fear of failure**: The most common cause is the fear of failure. The fact of the matter is that each one of us at some level dreads failure and all that comes along with it.
- **Fear of the unknown**: Anxiety arises because we don't know what to expect and students feel helpless. The best way to remedy this is to have mock sessions or replicate the exam by solving previous exam papers. Try to create the exam room ambience as far as possible to aid the replication. Set yourself time and see that you finish the paper.
- **Negative self-talk**: Negative self-talk can aggravate test

anxiety. Self talk is the continuous silent messages that we keep giving ourselves. Research has proven that the self-talk of test-anxious students almost always tends to be negative and self-defeating. Try writing your negative thoughts and then disputing each one with a positive statement. Start to encourage yourself as you would a friend. Repeating your positive statements to yourself will help reprogram your mind for success instead of failure.

• **Blanking out after seeing the question paper**:

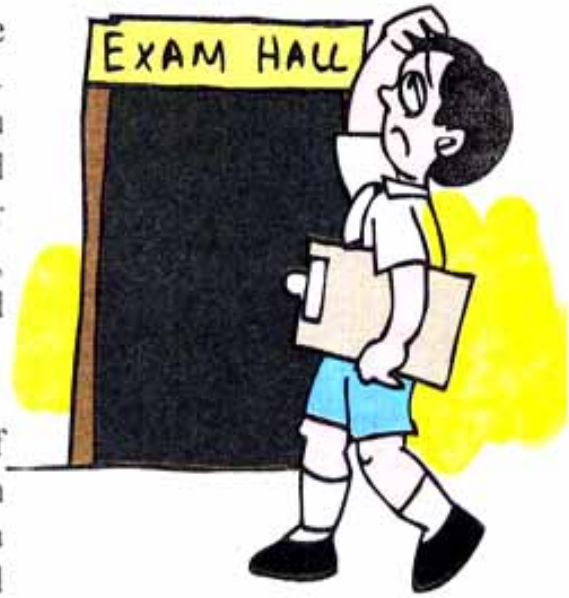
Relax!!! Read the question you think you know slowly and carefully. Plan your answers. Spend five minutes on a plan and rough notes which will help your answer to flow. Ignore everyone else who appears to be writing furiously and try drawing a spider diagram or a flow chart. You will suddenly see your thoughts and information getting organized. You will also find that the flowchart will help you generate links.

Some techniques to combat exam anxiety:

• **Imagine the worst:** When you are having spells of intense anxiety, sit down and calmly think what is the worst that will happen. If you have prepared well you will immediately get your answer that it can't be worse than a 'B' grade. Worst comes to worse you would get a 'C' grade. How bad is that really?

• **Visualization**: Days ahead of the exam start visualizing the entire exam scenario, down to its minutest details. Visualize right from getting

up in the morning to handing the paper over after you have finished. This method helps to make you feel that you have been there and have done it, thus reducing the fear of the unknown. Consequently, visualize yourself doing well and achieving your goals.



- **Pen it down:** One way of combating anxiety is to write down all the factors that are making you anxious. By doing so, you will find things are falling into perspective and will also help segregate real cause of anxiety from the imaginary ones. Once you know the concrete cause of your worry, you can chart a plan to combat it.

- **The emergency stop**: For anxiety that paralyses use this relaxation technique. As you begin to feel tense, say loudly to yourself, **'STOP!'** clench your teeth and jaw, hold for a count of five, and relax for a count of five. Repeat the same thing with your eyes, forehead, neck and shoulders. Finish with your hands and arms and see the difference – the relaxation technique will work wonders when you have tried it before and accustomed yourself to it.

In the end just remember:

Beat the anxiety and the stress
It will only create trouble and
an unnecessary mess
If you want to succeed, then
tension you should relieve
Tell yourself! "I can and in
myself I BELIEVE!"

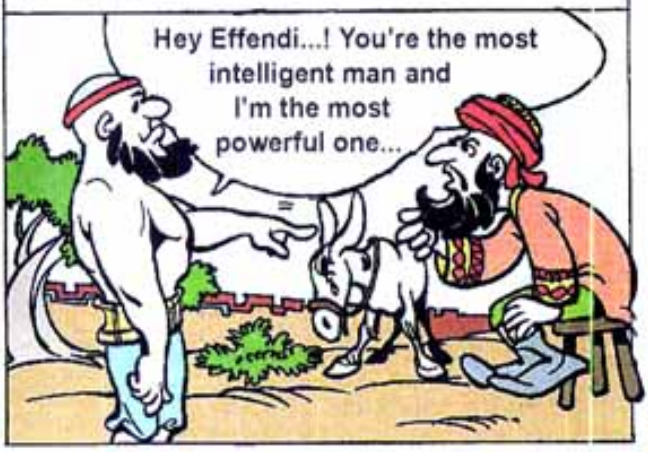
(The author is a professional counselling psychologist)

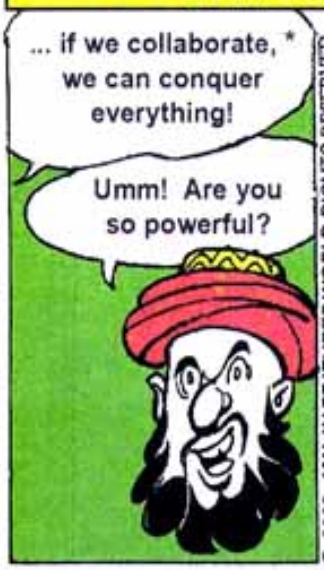
EFFENDI TALES

Power of Intelligence

MOHAN C. AJAYAN

One day a famous boxer approached Effendi who was well-known for his intelligence and wisdom.





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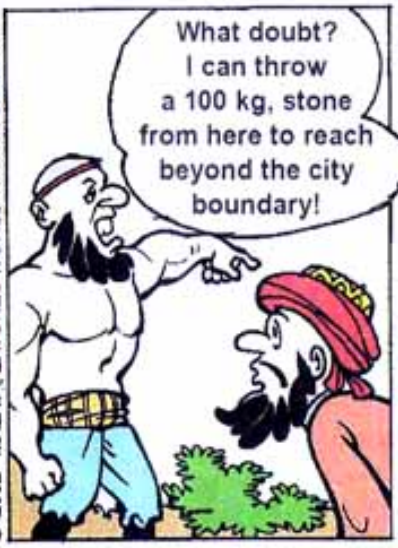

They went to the garden.

* Collaborate = work in combination

But the kerchief thrown by the strong man did not reach anywhere near the wall, not to speak of beyond it...

Ough!

Ha Ha Ha! You and your power!

The boxer tried again and again but the kerchief being light weight did not go too far.

How ridiculous you are! Can't even throw a kerchief far enough...

You see! I can do it very easily.

Umm! Let me see

Effendi took a stone and wrapped it with the kerchief.

See it go beyond the wall... Now tell me who is more powerful?

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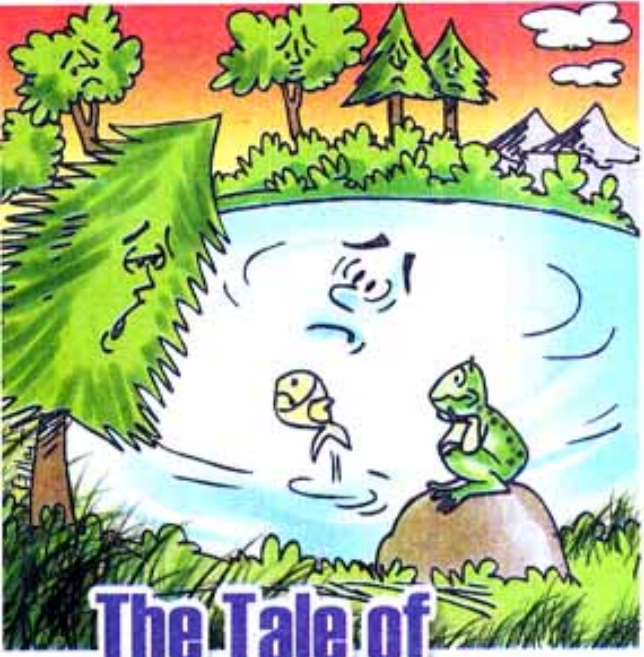
?!

So I am more powerful than you. Then why should I collaborate with you. If one is intelligent, he is also powerful.

2



The Tale of LUCY LAKE!

High in the mountains, deep in the forest, lived Lucy Lake. She was a large, cold lake with many different plants and animals living in and around her. On a normal day, the plants and animals at Lucy Lake had clear and clean water to drink and enough food by the lake-side to keep them healthy. The wind carried pure air, and the rain came down fresh and cool for the animals to enjoy.

As days passed by, Lucy Lake and her friends started feeling rather unwell. All the plants and animals of the forest gathered together to talk about their problem.

"Why do we feel so sick" asked Frannie Frog. "What is happening to us?" asked Sammy Squirrel. "There must be something harmful in the air," said O'Brian Owl.

"I am so worried, what shall we do?" was all that Lucy Lake could say in reply. No one had any answers.

Just then, two hikers appeared. They were on their way through the forest. The creatures of the forest felt that the hikers could solve all their problems. The stopped them, and gathered around to tell them their problems one after the other. "We are hungry!" "We are tired and weak", "Our babies are sick" - the plants and animals poured out their sad tales.

At last they asked, "Can you help us?"

Both the hikers said, "We think we know what the problem is; it must be acid rain."

Acid Rain! Lucy Lake and her friends were shocked to hear this!

One of the hikers said, "It comes from chemicals in the air or from pollution. A lot of this pollution comes from power plants that burn fossil fuels like coal to make electricity. We use this electricity to make our lights and our TVs work."

"Pollution also comes from the cars and trucks that we people drive," said the second hiker. "This pollution, when it intensifies, can cause acid rain."

Wendy Wind was so worried and said, "Even though I do not want to pollute the air, I have become a vehicle for pollution to travel long distances through the air!"

"And whatever is in the air, falls from the sky along with my raindrops! cried Raphael Rain.

"Let us stop fretting and put our heads together," said the first hiker.

"Yes, if you can help us think of solutions to the problem we will carry your message to other people. We could tell them how they could clean up our environment," said the second hiker.

With the help of the plants and animals, the two hikers made a list of ideas for saving Lucy Lake and her friends:

People could,

1.Turn off the lights whenever they left a room.

2. Use air conditioning only sparingly.

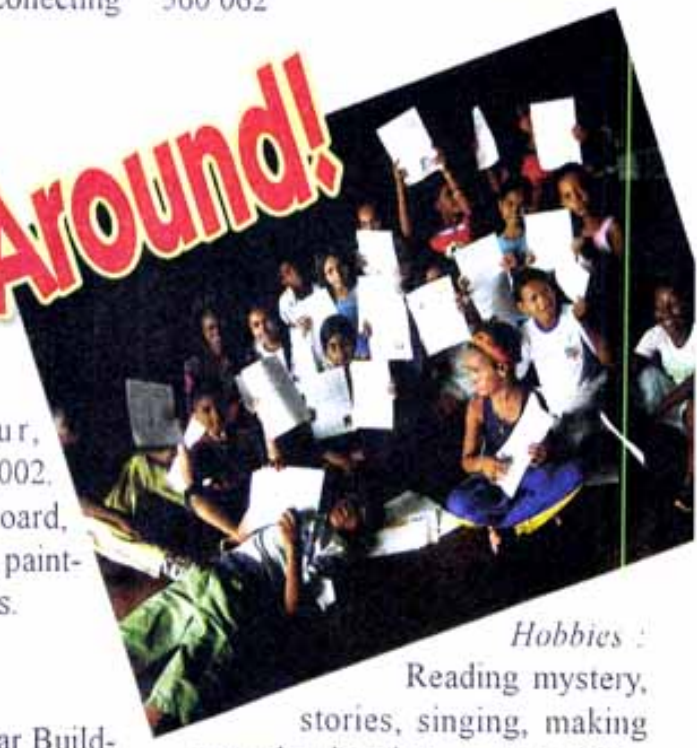
3. Use buses or trains instead of cars.

4. Buy only such cars that do not make the air dirty.

Time passed, and after a few years, the forest and the lake felt much better and things had changed a lot. The hikers when they climbed up the mountains to Lucy Lake, this time, also felt the difference and smiled at what they found. They felt glad, that the air was crystal clear and pure. "I am happy that **we** helped make a difference," said one hiker. "I am happy for the birds, beasts, and the trees, and most of all for Lucy Lake," said the other!

- U.M. Vidhya Sree, Std IV,
Sri Vidhya Mandir Matriculation
Higher Secondary School, Salem

Friends Around!



Name: **Lemter Rallan**
Age : 12
Address : D/o. K. Rallen, A. Engineer, Type 4 colony, Sipper - 790102, Arunachalpradesh.
Hobbies : Reading novels, collecting stickers and singing.

Name: **Ranjitha R. Prabhu**
Age : 16
Address : 1475, Maruti Vihar, Chakkarpur, Gurgaon, Haryana - 122 002.
Hobbies : Playing the keyboard, listening to music, drawing, painting, hanging out with friends.

Name: **Anupya choudary**
Age : 10
Address : C-608, Vidyanagar Building, Evershine Nagar, Malad (west), Mumbai - 400 064.
Hobbies: Watching Harry Potter movies, playing chess and carroms, listening to music, surfing the net, talking to friends, playing computer games.

Name: **Sheetal R. Holla**
Age : 12
Address : No. 9, 'Mathrushri', 2nd Cross, Timmarayappa Layout, Doddakallasandra, Bengalooru - 560 062
Hobbies : Reading mystery, stories, singing, making penpals, drawing, story writing, playing outdoor games, watching TV

Name: **P.H. Pushpadant**
Age : 14
Address : 4053, IX C, Wodeyar House, Sainik School, Bijapur, Karnataka 586 102.

Hobbies : Horse-riding, reading novels, swimming and playing video games.

Name: **T. Aswita Yadav**

Age : 11

Address : Sree Nilayam, No.5, Tauta Nagar, Thondamuthar Road, Vadavalli, Coimbatore - 641 041

Hobbies : Reading books and encyclopedia, writing stories and poems,

cycling and playing games.

Name: **K.K. Jaseena**

Age : 14

Address : Kattuparambil (H), Mathilakam P.O, Trissur, Kerala - 680685

Hobbies : Reading Potter series, watching Potter movies, drawing, listening to music, watching TV, sitting alone and dreaming.

Name: **M. Sathyaroopa**

Age : 12

Address : Panangattur, Ayyampalayam P.O, Erode Dt, Tamilnadu.

Hobbies : Dancing, playing with friends, drawing, watching wildlfe movies, cycling, reading books.

Name: **Kr. Boria Chatung**

Age : 14

Address : C/o. The principal, VKV SHER, (Boys Hostel), Kimn P.O, Papumpare Dt, Arunachal Pradesh - 791 121.

Hobbies : Listening to music, playing computer games, collecting photos of various bikes, reading novels etc.

Name: **Vishal Mauuri**

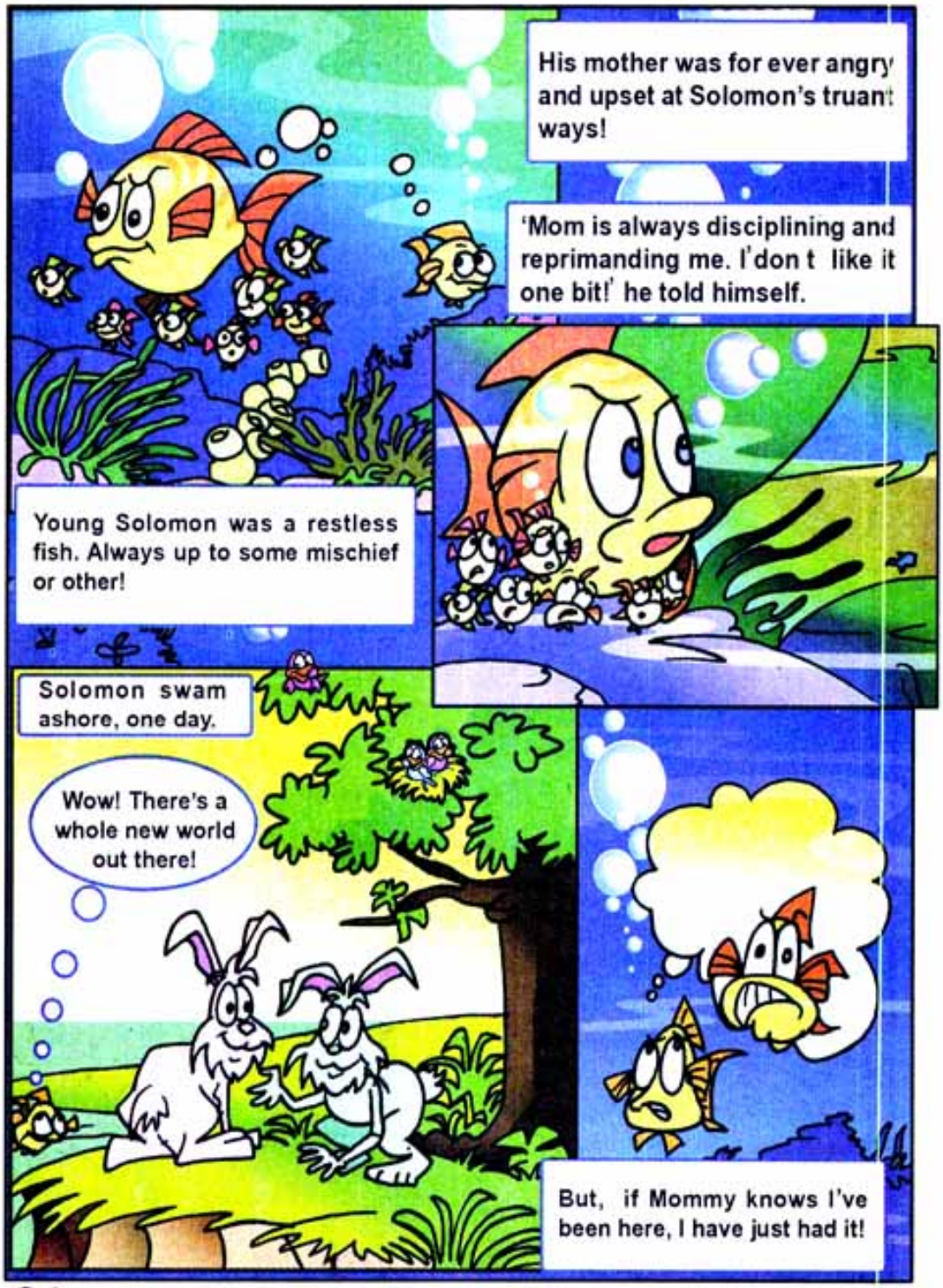
Age : 14

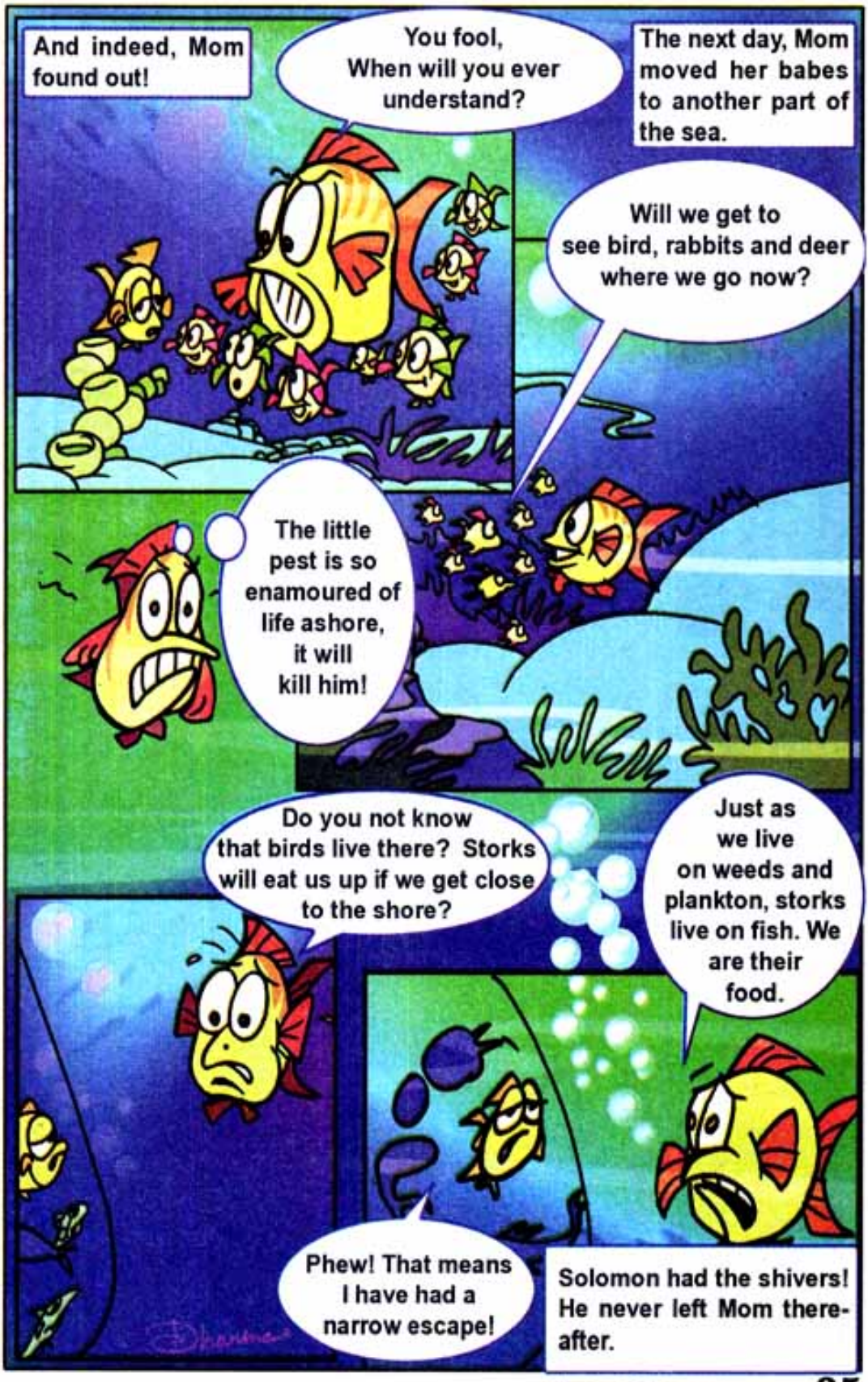
Address : 4089, IX A, Wodeyar House, Sainik School, Bijapur, Karnataka - 586 102.

Hobbies : Playing video games, singing and dancing, reading novels, surfing the net, collecting information about science.

Solomon's Stray Adventure!

Pictures : **Dharma** Story : **James**




And indeed, Mom found out!
You fool, When will you ever understand?
The next day, Mom moved her babes to another part of the sea.
Will we get to see bird, rabbits and deer where we go now?
The little pest is so enamoured of life ashore, it will kill him!
Do you not know that birds live there? Storks will eat us up if we get close to the shore?
Just as we live on weeds and plankton, storks live on fish. We are their food.
Phew! That means I have had a narrow escape!
Solomon had the shivers! He never left Mom there-after.

BIRTHD

Our neighbouring friend **R.Kiruthika** celebrates her 15th birthday on 24th April. We wish her all the best for the public exams too!

From best friends
N.N.Sridevi, N.N.Chitradevi

A.Kashyapan celebrates his 14th birthday on 4th April 2009. Best wishes.

From
Sudarshan

R.Tejasvi celebrates her 11th birthday on 25th April '09. May God bless you on this special day.

Wishes from
Mom, dad, grandparents, brother, cousins and **friends**.

Our dear brother **S.Ashwin** celebrates his 11th birthday on 23rd April '09. We wish him a very happy birthday and great success and happiness all through the years ahead.

Loving sisters **Shruthi, Arthi** and **Shreya**

My sister **R.Shamyatha** celebrates her 6th birthday on 25th April. Wish you a very Happy Birthday.

From Loving sister **Supraja**, brother **Sudharshan** and **aunts**.

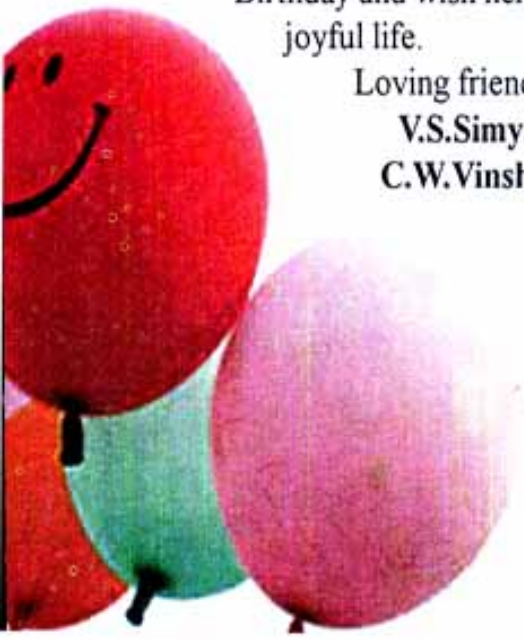
AY BASH!

S.Mathangi celebrates her 6th birthday on 16th April '09. We wish her good health, happiness, prosperity and a very bright future. May the Almighty shower his blessings on her for all the years to come.

Wishes from **S.Vaithianathan (grandpa), V.Kalpakam (grandma), S.Anuradha (mom)** and **V. Sivaramasubramanian (dad)**

My friend **K.S.Reshma** celebrates her birthday on 23.04.2009. We, with love, wish her a Happy Birthday and wish her a joyful life.

Loving friends **V.S.Simya, C.W.Vinsha**



My brother **S.T.Sudharshan** celebrates his 11th birthday on 11th April. Wish you a very Happy Birthday.

From Loving sister **Supraja** and **parents**.

Chitra celebrates her 16th birthday on 21.04.09. We wish her many more happy returns of the day and a bright future. Have a great birthday!

Loving friends **R.Kiruthika** and family, **K.Githanjali, R.Arunapriya, S.Alagu Meenakshi** and **Anusha Ashok.**

My cute son **N.Samhith** celebrates his 7th birthday on 9th April 2009. We wish him a world of happiness, health and prosperity.

With lots of love and kisses, **Mummy, uncle and brothers.**

Why do SUNFLOWERS Face the SUN?

A Bengali myth

Once upon a time, there used to be a world of fairies, on the far off stars we see from our earth. They were very happy there and they knew no worries. They had a king who ruled over them and loved him very much. Every day they would gather around him and make merry music.

One day Sun's daughter, Surya saw the king. She fell in love with him at first sight. She came down and asked him, if he would marry her. The king refused to. Surya became very angry and using her magical powers, she captured him and took him to her home. The king was unable to protest.

Meanwhile, in the fairy world, the king had been missing for more than two days. The fairies were worried. Then they came to know that he had been kidnapped. After much investigation, they came to know that Sun's daughter had kidnapped him.

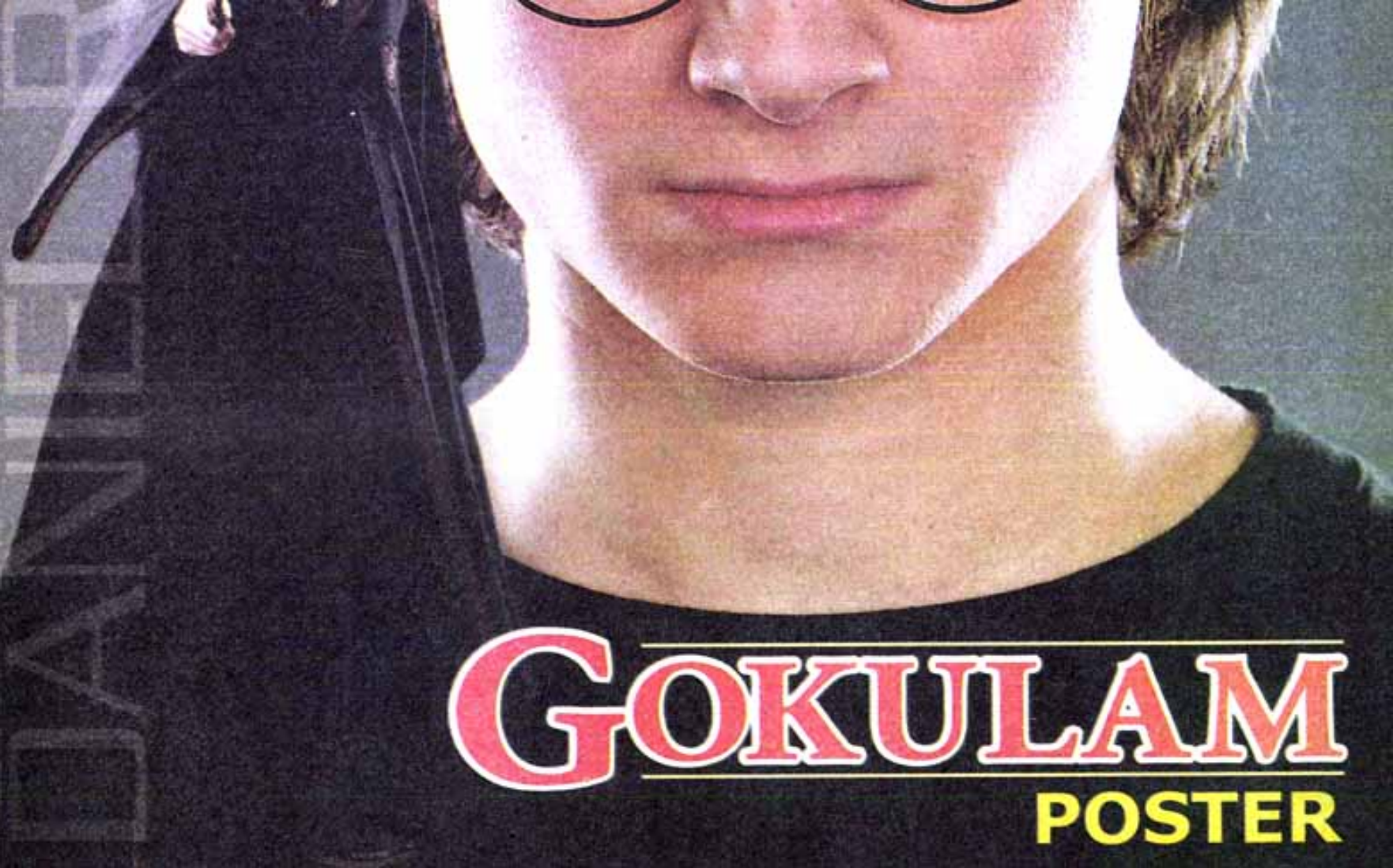
To rescue their king, the fairies flew towards the Sun's house. But they did not have enough magical powers to reach there or fight the Sun. Even as they flew near the Sun, their wings got burnt and they fell on the earth!

After a few days, sunflower plants grew on the land where the fairies had fallen. Soon, the plants grew tall and began to

flower. And every flower that bloomed, looked with longing at the Sun, hoping to catch a glimpse of their king.

To this day the sunflowers always face the Sun, wherever he goes, and it is said that they continue to look for their beloved king.

- Sarbani Chakraborty,
Std. VII
K.V. 1 A/,
Bazaar Portblair
Andaman & Nicobar Islands


GOKULAM
POSTER

✉ I am a new reader and a great fan of Harry Potter. Please publish more articles and news about Harry Potter.

- Utpanna Hota, Std. VII, D.A.V. Public School, Bhubaneshwar

✉ I thank Grandma for providing solutions to my problems. Because of her, I have learnt a lot and Gokulam has also helped me to do one of my college projects well.

- Neha Jha, Std.IX, Rama Devi Women's College, Bhubaneswar

✉ You have said that contributors should not copy, but is it not applicable for drawings too? How is it that a Donald Duck drawing was published in the February 2009 issue?

- KU.Lilabati Mohanta, Std. IX, St.Francis S.S. School, Chattisgarh

*(Some skills like shading and colouring are involved in the process of drawing and these need to be recognized though the pictures may be 'copied'. Gokulam gives a lot of importance to original pictures too – **editor**.)*

✉ I like reading Gokulam because it has interesting stories, jokes and different items. Congratulations to the editorial team for giving us such a fantastic, fabulous magazine.

- P.A.Veda Varsha, Std.VII, Yashasvi International School, Bengalooru.

✉ I am a new reader. I did not know all these days that such an awesome magazine existed. I went out to buy a children's

magazine and was happy to pick it up by chance. And 80 pages for just ten rupees! I could not believe it.

- S.Aravindh, Std.VIII, St.Joseph's H.S.S., Hosur

✉ I love reading Gokulam. It is the best magazine for children of my age. I tell this because my brother who

is in college still loves to read Gokulam! My vocabulary has improved since I started reading Gokulam. Can you please publish a poster of Michael Jackson?

- N.Sri, Std.VII, St.Dominic's Anglo Indian H.S.S, Chennai

✉ Do we get participation certificates for writings published in viewpoint?

- Rushab. R. Bhandari, Ranebennur, Karnataka.

*(Yes, Rushab, but it can be sent only if you put down complete details of your class, school and residential address. – **editor**)*

✉ Gokulam is the Monarch of Magazines! I am a great fan of Dragon Ball Z. Can you please publish a centre spread poster of DBZ?

- Shreyas K., Std. VII, P.M.M. Innerwheel School, Ambarnath (E)

✉ When I first started reading Gokulam, I could not understand a word! But now, I am happily able to read and it has improved my vocabulary and I can read a page in two minutes. Thanks for publishing my cockatoo drawing in the Jan issue.

- Anupya Chaudry, Std.V, RIS, Mumbai

✉ I want to thank Gokulam for giving me a new and good friend Humira, through the penpals column. Will I get a participation certificate for this?

- Reshma.K.S., Std.VIII, C.K.C.G.H.S, Thrissur.

*(No participation certificates for penpals, letterbox, birthday bash, grandmaworm, doctor knows best. The certificates are intended for recognizing talent and ideas – **editor**.)*

✉ Gokulam is a fantastic magazine. Can I write a serial story and can I send it without the pictures?

- Sreelakshmi, Std.V, Gurudakshina, Kollam.

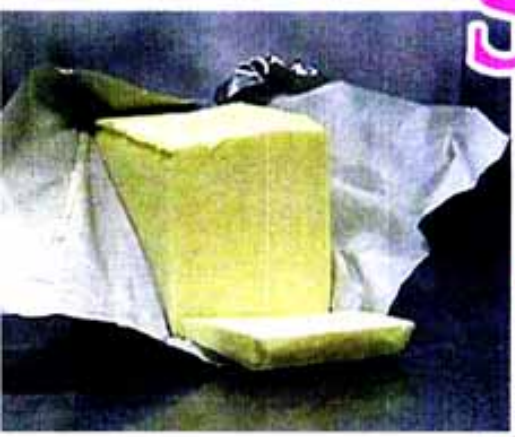
*(May be you should try writing smaller stories first, Sreelakshmi. You don't have to send pictures for them – **editor**.)*

Sandwich

Here are two sandwich recipes to help you 'snack through' the summer hols!

You need:

Bread, butter, onions,



tomato, cheese, ground pepper

Method:

Chop one onion and one tomato fine (the quantity could vary as per your requirement). Melt a table spoon of butter in a non-stick pan and sauté the chopped vegetables. Grate the cheese and spread it over a slice of bread. Now spread the sauted vegetable mixture over it, gently. Sprinkle some pepper powder over it. Close with another slice of bread.

Lightly grease a sandwich toaster and place the sandwich in it. Toast over gentle flame, turning it over to get both sides crisp. You could also use an electric sandwich toaster or a grill.

- A.Aswin Vayiravan, Std.XI, TVSMHSS, Madurai

Grilled TC Sandwich

You need:

Brown sandwich bread - 4 slices

Butter – 1 tablespoon

For the tomato garlic spread:

Butter – half a table spoon

Puree of one large tomato

Garlic flakes – four (crushed)

Salt – half a spoon

Black pepper powder – half a spoon

Grated cheese – 50 grams

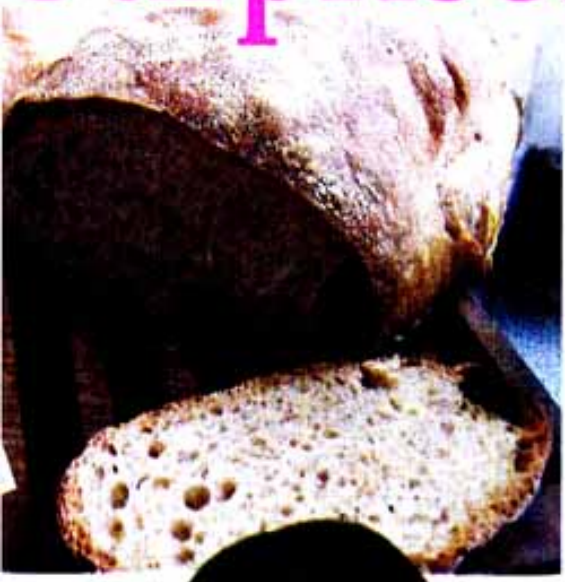
Method:

Toast each slice of bread crisp in a toaster. Spread butter over each slice and set aside. Heat butter in a

pan, add tomato puree and garlic flakes and stir for a few minutes. Add salt and pepper.

Cuisine Corner

Surprise!



Stir till thick, remove from flame and allow cooling. Spread this mixture over the buttered toast, sprinkle grated cheese over it evenly, close with another slice and enjoy the spicy treat.

- Preity G.Iyer,
Age 17, Nagpur.
(Complete address required)

The GIRL with ONE HORN!

Roly hated the pony tail that hung high above her right temple. When it was oiled and tied with a broad and bright ribbon, she looked funny like a big, fat bunny. Boys and girls at school poked fun at the swinging bob and made up a rhyme to suit her hairstyle.

Roly-Poly, Roly-Poly, one horned girl.

Roly-Poly, Roly-Poly, her hair does n't curl.

Roly tried arguing it out with her mother one day.

"Why do you have to tie this pony tail above my ear?" she hissed in anger. "Do you know , everybody at school calls me the girl with one horn?"

"Let them, you don't bother." Mother sounded casual. "You know, they are all jealous that you look beautiful."

"Beautiful, my foot!" Roly stomped about. "I look like a bull in the bull fight arena."

"Enough Roly!" Mother became serious. "I know how convenient it is not to have hair falling over your fore-head and eyes all the time."

"But Ma, I'm already eleven and should be looking more hep and not babyish."

"You talk as though you are eighteen already." Mother snubbed. "Remember, even I used to have my hair tied in this manner when I was much older than you and so did your Grandma in her times and her mother before her."

"Ah that was it! The one horn fashion!

It ran in the family and come what may, her mother would not change the prized style and Roly had to follow the tradition without much fuss.

Feeling helpless, all that Roly could do was grunt and grumble and wait for a chance to take it out on her mother. The

▪ Geeta Canpadee ▪

opportunity came sooner than expected.

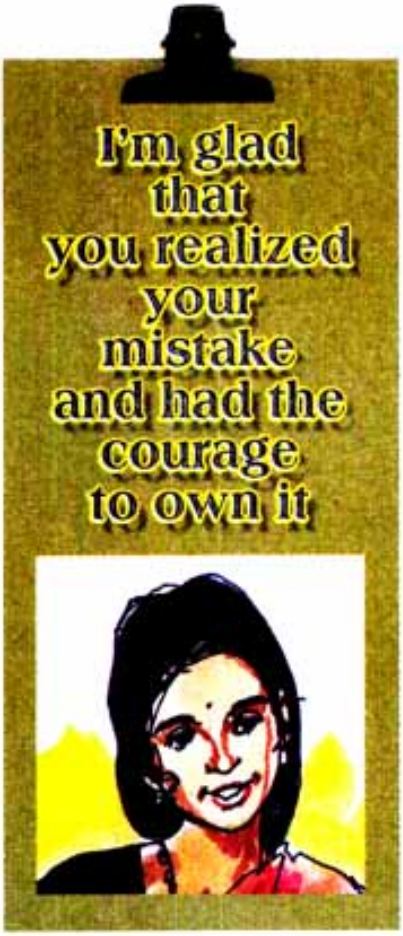
One evening when her mother was getting ready to attend a family function, she summoned her daughter to go and fetch her new pair of high heels from the chappal stand. When Roly reluctantly went to seek the glittering foot-wear, a cheeky thought crossed her mind. She decided to hide it amidst the thick bushes in the garden so that her mother would spend the entire evening searching for her best pair of high heels. She would then be late for the function and miss all the fun.

'Serves her right', Roly decided, as she stealthily slipped her feet into the high heels and ran out to the garden, in search of an obscure bush. But before she could as much as walk a yard, she let out a deafening screech.

"Maa....Maaa....Maaaa...." was all she could scream as she hopped around the garden, trying to shake the sandals off her feet.

Mother came rushing to the spot in panic and to her shock spotted a blue scorpion clinging on to her daughter's left foot.

Without a moment's delay, she dropped the napkin in her hand right over the scorpion's tail and bent down to pull the sting off Roly's toes. As the girl continued to howl in pain, Mother bravely held the enmasked creature captured unawares, and threw it far away from anybody's reach.



Meantime the entire neighbourhood had gathered on the spot. Someone had quickly, managed to fetch a physician. Anti-toxin was administered on the spot and Roly's foot bandaged. She ended up with a fever for the next couple of days and all the while, Mother sat next to Roly, attending to her needs.

"I am very very sorry, Ma." Roly confessed at length. "Actually, I meant to hide your best pair of high heels so that you would miss going to the function. I wanted to see you dejected and spoil your evening. That way I thought I'd take my revenge for the horn over my head."

Mother paused for a while. She held her daughter's hands and said, "I'm glad that you realized your mistake and had the courage to own it up. So, now you know the result of doing bad to others. Never try getting into others shoes and remember that you are always judged by your actions and not by your looks, do you get that?"

Roly nodded briskly as the pony tail over her right ear, bobbed accordingly.

Later, during the day, the boys and girls from her school dropped by to wish her well. And for once, everyone ignored the horn on Roly's head and instead talked on and on, only about the Scorpion Tail (Tale)!

Zero-In - 9

This month's Zero In is all about fooling! Write down the answers indicated by the clues in the boxes below. Rearrange the circled letters within the boxes to Zero-in on the final answer. The final clue will help you do this. Happy Holidays!

1. The bird which was fooled by a fox in a popular fable.

2. An animal which fools its enemies by changing its colour.

3. First day of this month is associated with fools!

4. In a popular story, a tortoise won over this animal!

5. As per a popular nursery rhyme, this boy tried to fool his father by saying that he was not eating sugar.

6. The animal that tried to fool a monkey (But later was fooled by the monkey) in a Panchatantra tale.

Fill in the form on the reverse of this page and send your entries to Gokulam before **25.04.09**

Answer: A Genius who entertained us by merely 'fooling around' in movies

- G.S.S

ZERO IN - 7

1. S T (R) A I G H T

2. (F) (R) A N C (E)

3. J A (Y) A (B) H A D (U) R I

4. V (A) M A N A

Answer:

F E B R U A R Y

Congratulations! Here are the winners of Zero-in-7 (February 2009) and the solutions as well. The results of Zero In - 8 will be published in the May 2009 issue.

1. Arnashri Kundu, Std IX, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Kharagpur, West Bengal - 721 301.

2. J.G. Vandhana, Std VIII, Kendriya Vidyalaya, N.A.L, Bengalooru.

3. Sonali Pattnaik, Std VII, Sudarshan Vidya Mandhir, Bengalooru.

4. S. Ojas, Std VI, Hindu Senior Secondary School, Adyar, Chennai.

5. N. Vignesh, Std IV, Bhavans, Sanikpuri, Secunderabad.

ZERO-IN - 9 Entry Form

Name : (Mr/Ms) .....

Age : ..... Class : .....

School : .....

*Residential Address : .....

..... Pin .....

Signature : .....

* Local address is a must for overseas entries.

The Editor, Gokulam, Kalki Buildings,

47-NP, Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Ekkaduthangal, Chennai - 600 032.

● Strictly for school going children ● Five lucky winners will get a cash award of Rs.50/- each. They will be decided by a draw of lots from out of the all correct entries. ● Entries with completed grid on the reverse accepted on this form only ● No xerox copies.

Last Date : 25.4.2009

SHADOW PICTURES

Make it Yourslf

You Need:

Sheets of white paper, A sharpened pencil, Black or coloured water-proof ink, A paint brush.

Method:

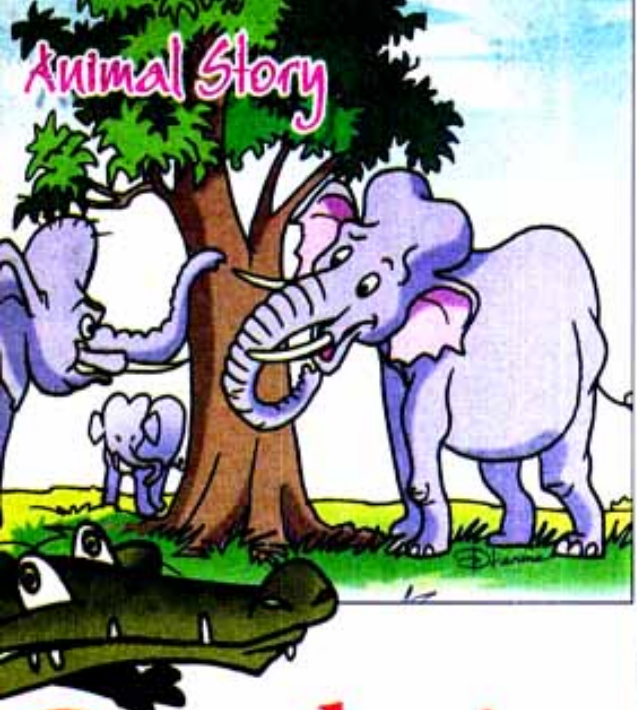
Go out into the garden with your blank paper and pencil. Observe the plants and leaves that cast shadows. Select a shadow of interesting shape.

Now place your white paper sheet where the shadow falls. It could be the shadow of a single leaf or a bunch of flowers or a twig. Now carefully draw the outline of the shadow that falls on the white paper. Let not the shadow of your own hand come in the way.

After the outline is complete, you can fill up the outline with ink, using the paint brush. After some practice, you could start filling the shadow with patterns or multiple colours.

You will be left with an interesting poster to hang up in you room or gift to a friend.

- M.Nandhini, Std.VIII, St.Jospeh's Anglo Indian H.S.S., Trichy



Crocky's Cool Plan!

Once upon a time, in a far away jungle, there lived a very cruel herd of elephants. These elephants used to break the branches of the tall trees in the forest. The trees bore birds' nests and the menace of the elephants ruined these nests in no time. Many birds lost their babies and their un-hatched eggs. This became a regular event in the jungle. All the birds were in great distress. Their families were always in danger. They mustered up courage to approach some of the elephants, and requested them to stop the havoc; but all in vain.....!

One day, the birds held a meeting to find a permanent solution to their problem. One of them suddenly said, "I have an idea.....! Why don't we ask our crocodile friend, Croky to help us out?"

"But how can he help....?" A second bird asked. "I mean, he doesn't have any contact with those elephants, does he?"

Some of the birds shouted, "He may or may not know the elephants but,

let's try this out as we have no other option."

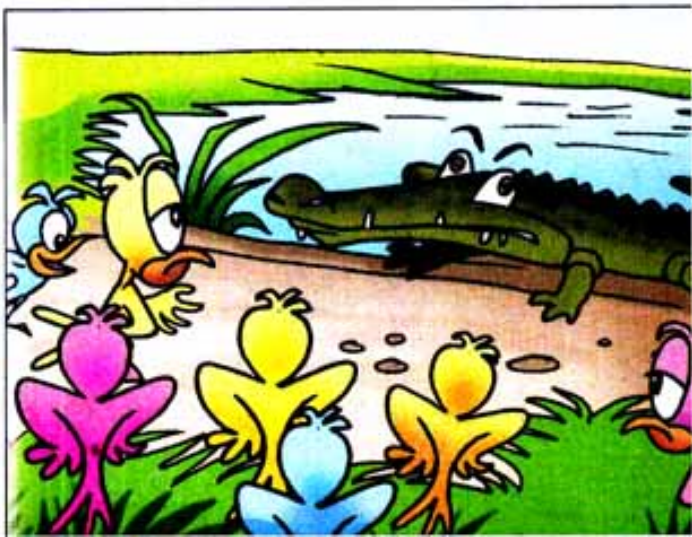
The next day all the birds rushed to the riverside to meet Croky. On hearing the ruckus they created, Croky popped his head out of the water. He

was taken aback to see a whole group of flustered bird faces. "Hey! What's the matter?" he asked. "Why do you all look so worked-up.....?"

The birds began to speak all at once and there was a dismayed medley of twitters, tweets and whistles all around.

"Hey, not so fast," Croky stopped them. "One of you speak for the group, please," he said rather firmly.

A bird came forward and began to speak. "We all need your help," he said. With all the birds pitching in their bit now and then, their problem was graphically narrated to Croky. Croky listened keenly



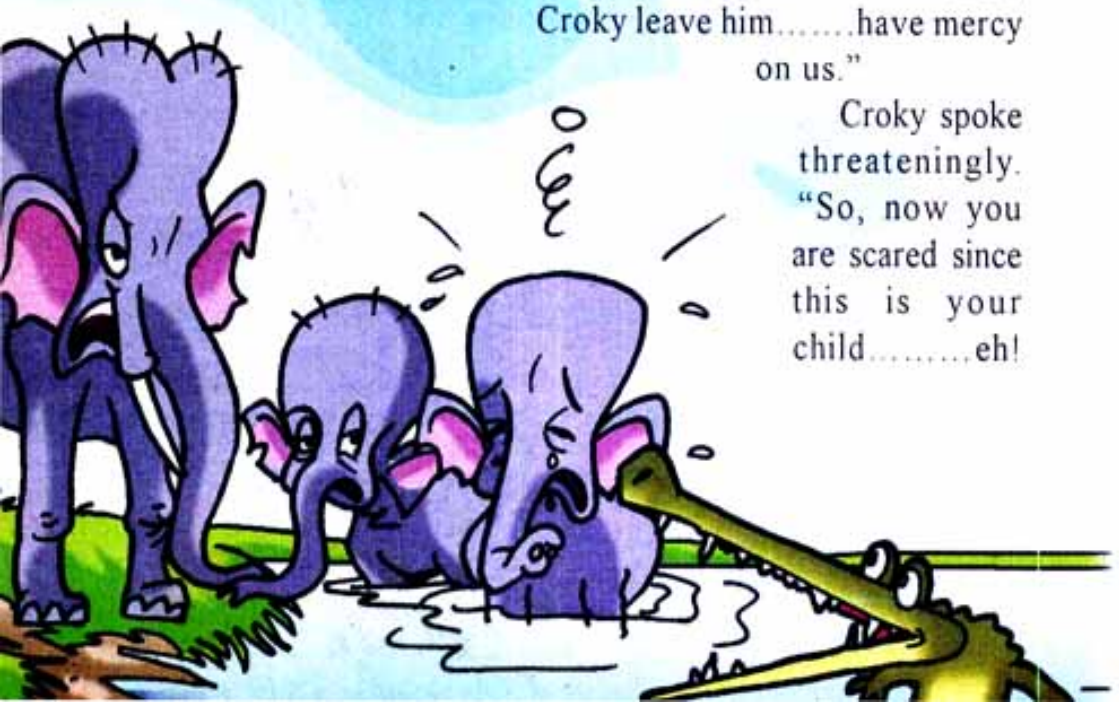
and after a few minutes, he replied, "Hmmm!!! this is truly atrocious! Well, don't worry friends, I shall very soon find a solution."

The next day, when the elephants came to the river to bathe, Croky was determined to teach them a lesson. The herd had all the family members in it. The moms, dads, babes, uncles, ants and the grandparents.

Croky waited till he saw some of the baby elephants leave the side of the older ones. The babes began playing among themselves at a side. Croky slowly moved below the water and went near the young ones and caught one of them lightly by the leg.

The baby elephant cried out so loudly that other elephants were startled. The mother elephant came running and cried, "My baby!.....Oh no.....! Please, Croky leave him.....have mercy on us."

Croky spoke threateningly. "So, now you are scared since this is your child.....eh!



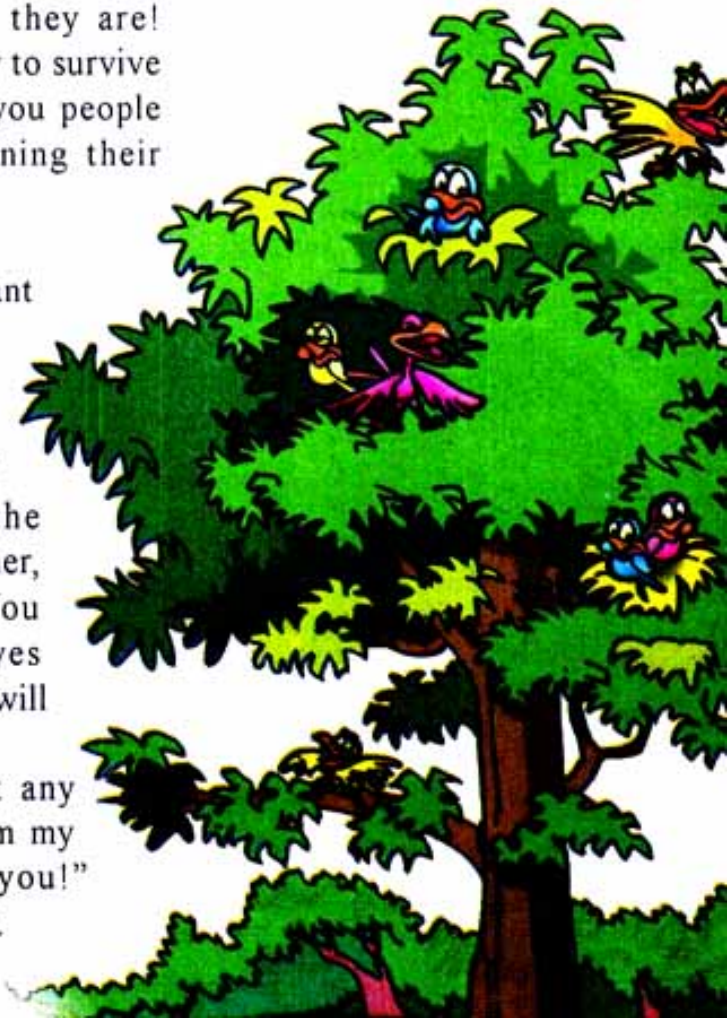
"Never, Croky....never again!" assured the elephants. They all went to the birds and apologized. The jungle birds could once again lead their lives peacefully.

And what about the innocent birds who have lost their babies because of your cruel acts? How scared and worried they are! They don't know how to survive in this forest where you people are always busy ruining their homes!"

The mother elephant and all the others hung their heads in shame. "We are really very sorry for what we did to the birds," said the mother, feeling guilty. "You have opened our eyes Croky. I promise we will not do this again."

"I should not get any more complaints from my bird friends about you!" warned Croky sternly.

- Abhishek Chatterjee, Std. XI, D.A.V. Public School, (Unit – 8) Bhubaneswar.

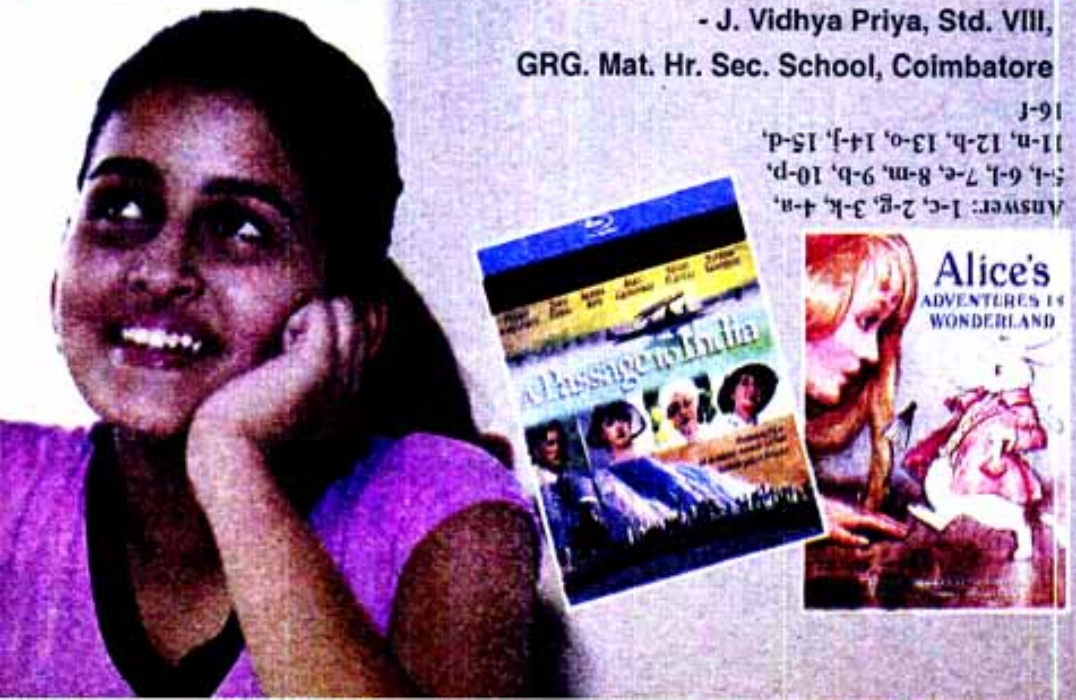


Activity

MATCH the MASTERS

Books	Authors
1) The Colour of Magic	a) Voltaire
2) The Jungle Book	b) Maxim Gorky
3) Gulliver's Travels	c) Terry Pratchett
4) Candide	d) L.Frank Baum
5) Lost Horizon	e) Lewis Carroll
6) The Prisoner of Zenda	f) Aurthur Conan Doyle
7) Alice's Adventures in Wonderland	g) Rudyard kipling
8) A Tale of Two Cities	h) William Golding
9) Mother	i) James Hilton
10) Moby Dick	j) Daniel Defoe
11) The Grapes of Wrath	k) Jonathan swift
12) Lord of the Files	l) Anthony Hope
13) A Passage to India	m) Charles Dickens
14) Robinson Crusoe	n) John Steinbeck
15) The Wonderful Wizard of Oz	o) E.M.Forster
16) Adventures of Sherlock Holmes	p) Herman Melville

- J. Vidhya Priya, Std. VIII,
GRG. Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Coimbatore



Answer: 1-c, 2-g, 3-k, 4-a, 5-i, 6-j, 7-e, 8-m, 9-b, 10-p, 11-n, 12-h, 13-o, 14-j, 15-d, 16-f

Most of you have been sending us jokes, facts and snippets gathered from the internet or G.K. books. Do show us how original you can be. Write your thoughts and ideas on various issues. Report funny happenings at school or home. Do make sure that you put down your name, age, class, school name and residential address individually on each and every contribution that you send to Gokulam. Contributions sent to gokulam@kalkiweekly.com must also bear these details.

★ The best ones will be published and a participation certificate will be sent to the contributor.

★ Please preserve your participation certificates. **In case you don't receive the certificates which are mailed to you by Gokulam, keep a xerox copy of your contribution in your collection. The contributor who collects the most number of certificates will win a prize.**

ATTENTION!

★ All competition entries should reach us before the last date mentioned.

★ Entries to Birthday Bash column should reach us along with the appropriate message and photographs **two months before the birthday.**

★ Do be original in your contributions and creations. If you have based your writing on a source, be sure to acknowledge it and name it and...

NEVER EVER COPY!

ALL GOKULAM READERS AND CONTRIBUTORS...

THE CARPENTER

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house-building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife, enjoying his extended family. He would miss the pay cheque but he needed to retire. They could get by.

The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favour. The carpenter said yes, but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career.

When the carpenter finished his work, the employer came to inspect the house. He handed the front door key to the carpenter.

"This is your house, he said; "my gift to you."

The carpenter was shocked! What a shame! If he had known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently.

So it is with us. We build our lives, one day at a time, often putting less than our best into our building. Then with a shock we realize, we have to live in the house we built. If we could do it all over again, we would do it much differently. But we cannot go back.

Your attitudes and the choices you make today, build the house you may live in tomorrow.

"Life is a do it yourself project," someone has said.

Sourced by: **Jayashree Raman, Std. XI, National Sarvodaya Junior College, Mumbai**

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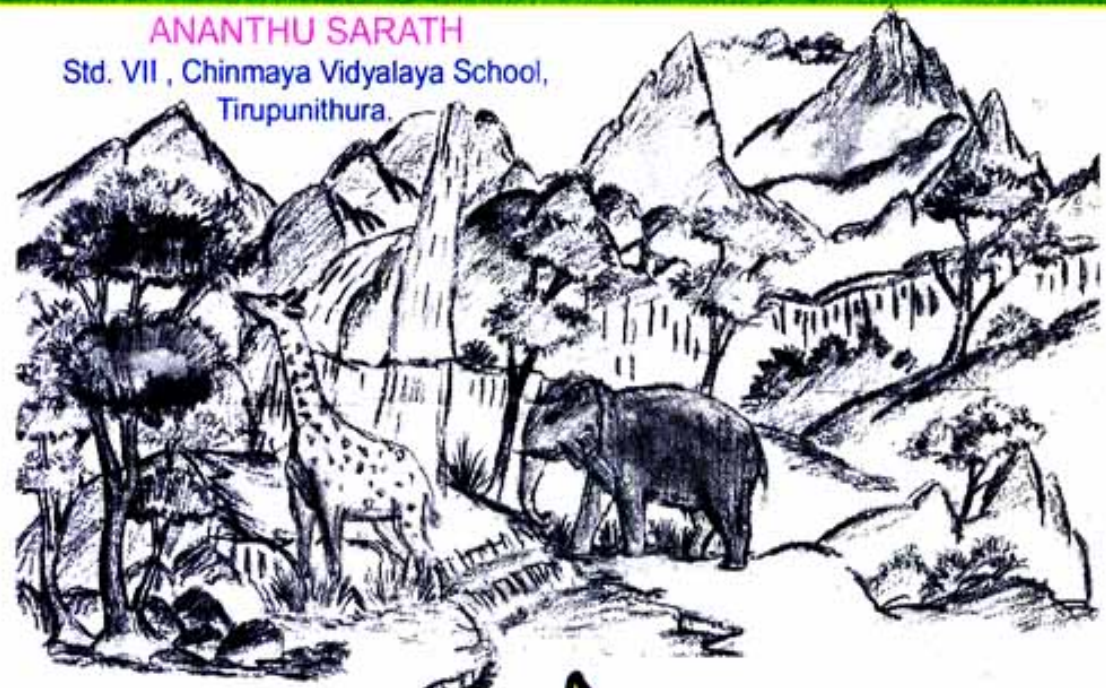

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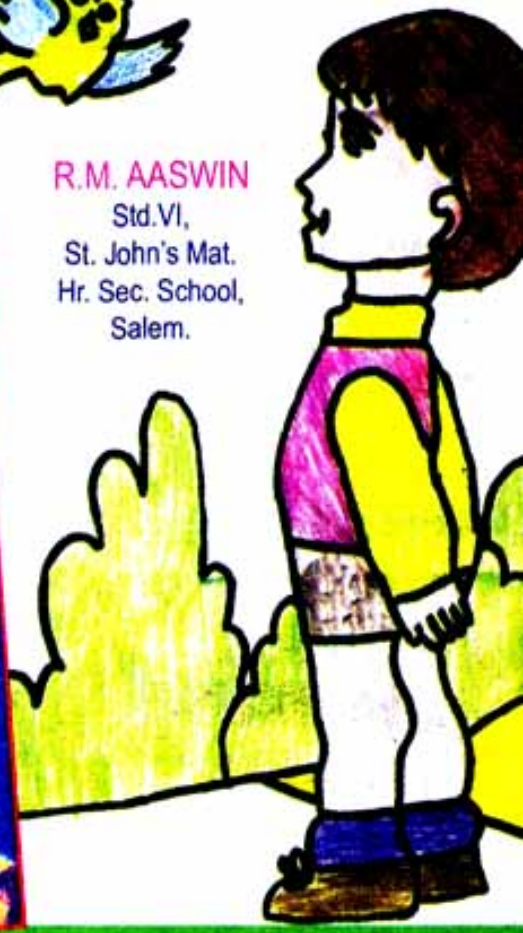
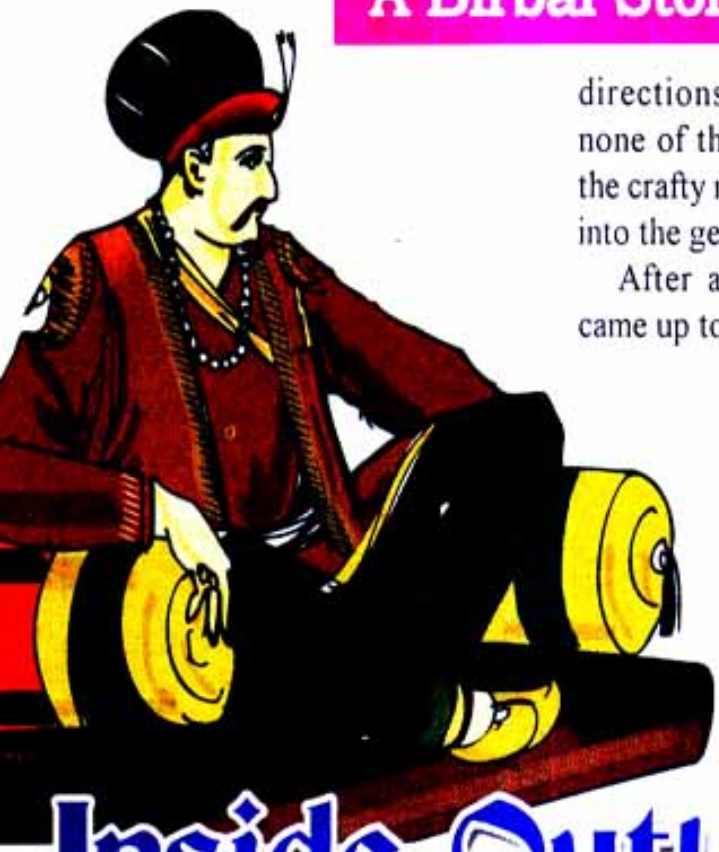




Inside Out!

Emperor Akbar once banished his minister Birbal from the court. It was an impulsive act, for a minor mistake committed by the minister. Birbal was very upset. He went away to a remote village where nobody knew him or recognized him.

Soon, Akbar began to regret his brashness and missed all the intelligent conversations that he used to have with Birbal. He sent his soldiers to look for Birbal and they went searching in all directions of the kingdom. But none of them succeeded in finding the crafty minister who had blended into the general population!

After a few months, a soldier came up to Akbar and told him that a holy man and his disciples had come seeking his audience.

"The disciples claim that their Guru is the wisest of wise men your Highness," said the soldier to Akbar.

"Ask them to come," said Akbar

and the soldier brought the wise sage and his retinue of disciples to the court.

"You look wise, sir," said Akbar. "And your disciples say that you are the wisest man on earth. Permit my ministers to test you with some questions." The wise man, agreed without a fuss.

"If you answer all the questions right, I will make you a minister," assured Akbar, who was badly in need of company for intelligent conversation and intellectual debates. The sage nodded in approval and the nine ministers of Akbar's court who were called the Navarathnas, began their questions.

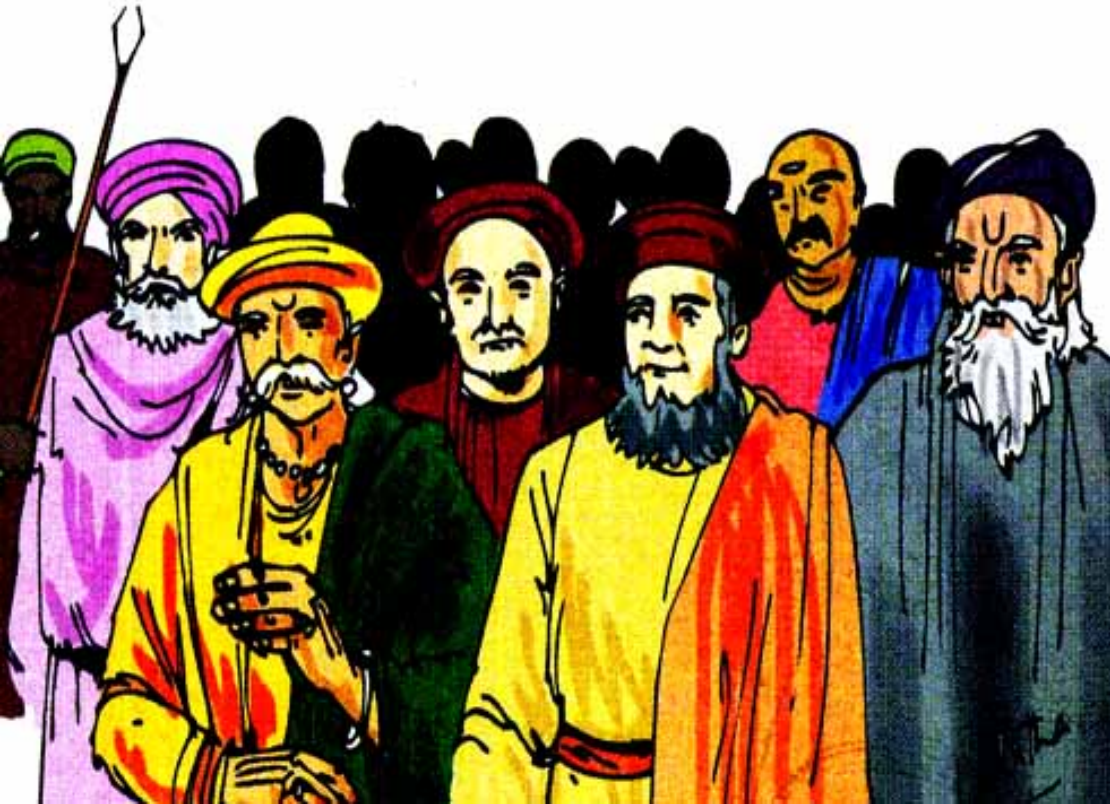
"Who is man's best friend in this world?" asked Raja Todarmal. "His good sense" replied the sage promptly.

"What is most valuable in this world?", asked Faizi and the old sage said, "knowledge, is the answer to your question."

Abul Fazl came up with the next question: "Which is the shallowest pit in the world?" Pat came the reply: "A mean man's heart!"

"What is it that cannot be recovered after it is lost?" asked Aziz Koka. "Life!", was the simple answer given by the sage.

Rahim Khan thought his question would be the most difficult as he asked, "How far does



the world extend?" The sage replied with a smile, "As far as one's death."

Raja Mansingh questioned: "What travels faster than wind?" "Man's imagination," replied the old man.

"And what would be the sweetest thing in the world?" Bhagawan Das shot the question!

"A baby's smile, of course" was the unperturbed reply!

Tansen asked the holy man two questions: "What is undying about our music? And what sounds sweet at night?"

"The notes are undying and prayers to God sound sweet even in the middle of the night", replied the Guru.

The Emperor then took it on himself to ask a few questions. The sage replied to those too. The conversation went thus:

Emperor: What is the most needed quality to rule over a country?

Sage: Diplomacy.

Emperor: Who is a king's greatest enemy?

Sage: His selfishness.

Akbar was pleased with the answers. He stepped towards the sage and said, "I am happy with your answers. But there is one thing that I wish to ask you – can you perform a miracle?"

"Certainly! I can, make the person in your mind come alive right here and now," said the holy man and immediately Akbar requested him to produce Birbal.

There was a stunned silence in the court. The holy man did not utter a word, but simply removed his false beard and wig. Yes, it was Birbal who stood there, much to the surprise of the courtiers.

But neither Akbar nor Birbal were surprised, for Birbal knew what was in Akbar's mind and Akbar knew only too well, that his minister knew him inside out!

- R.Subramani, Std.IX,
The Oxford School, Bengalooru.

CHANDU and the ROBBERS!

Story : **Dhanasekar** Pictures : **Pillai**

Alone in the cave.
How do I escape from these scoundrels?
If I am caught running away, they'll kill me! Ah, I have an idea!
The next day...
Friends! I have a wish
And what is it now?
You guys work so hard at robbing...
Huh! What are you driving at?
I just want to be of some help to you.
How can you help us to rob, you simpleton!
Take me with you and allow me to carry some booty.
Not a bad idea. Let's do so tomorrow.
That night in the village...
We're now going to rob the farmer's house. Grab all you can.
Sure, will do my best.
The four went in different directions.

Inside the farm house...
Ah, a horn! How wonderful!
I just have to blow this to wake the neighbourhood!
... And the theives will be caught, and I will be free too!
But, if the theives escape, they will murder me!
He hid behind a tree.
Just then a loud noise broke...
Bang!
Oh, God! What was that noise!
A startled Chandu pulled out the horn and played it!
The village woke up!
Who are you? What are you up to?
Catch the robbers first, before they make away
The thieves who tried to run away were caught
You thieves! How long have you been at this?
The village chief was pleased with Chandu.
Who are you and what brought you here?
I came looking for a job...
Chandu explained...
You may stop looking and start working for me.
Thank you sir!

Dear Grandma,

I want to score cent percent in my Board exams. What should I do?

- Akshay.J., Bhattad, Wadi.

I aim at 90%; get only 85%. How am I to achieve my goal?

- K.A. Karthik, Bangalore

I get only average marks in History. How can I improve?

- Subhrasmita Praharaj, Bhubaneswar

I used to get first rank. Now I am in second. The boy who got first rank is teasing me.

- Anupya Choudary, Mumbai

I am in a C.B.S.E, School. I'm from Malaysia and I am weak in Hindi. I'm afraid I'll fail this year.

- R. Shankar Narayanan, Manipal

Stressful School Days!

My marks are going down in maths. My parents are upset, please help.

- Radhika Ramesh, Pune.

I am in class VIII. My parents are always telling me that I am not reading as well as I did last year.

- Barsha Naik, Kolkata

Dear Children,

I receive such pathetic letters almost every day. I feel sorry - not for those who write such letters, but for our educational system, which places such a heavy burden on students and makes them so nervous about school and exams. Many children are unable

to cope with the stress and strain and counselling becomes necessary and the number of such children is constantly on the increase! School days must be happy days and should not turn out to be miserable. Ofcourse a sense of responsibility is required but that should not arise out of fear of exams. However, as long as the system is there, you will have to live with it. There are certain golden rules to follow: 1) Understand the lesson: don't mug up except for some dates, formulae etc. If you don't understand, ask for help from your teacher or parents 2) Plan your studies to make best use of time available. Devote more time to the subjects in which you are weak. 3) Writing is better than reading. It helps to concentrate, understand and remember. 4) Get the question papers of past years and practise writing the answers. 5) Do not postpone studies. It adds to your burden. 6) Don't become a T.V addict. It kills time. 7) Play a vigourous outdoor game at least for thirty minutes every day. Good exercise, a healthy diet and sound sleep are needed for a bright and alert mind. 8) Studying early in the morning helps to absorb more than late night study. 9) Above all remember that the work that you put in ***honestly****, is more important than the end result and that is the message of the Gita.*

Grandmaworm

• • •

I have three friends, but two of them are asking me not to speak with the third. I feel sad. I want all three of them as my friends.

- Shriyea, Salem

Dear Shriyea,

I appreciate your sentiment in not wanting to lose a friend. But you should also find out why your other two friends do not want you to talk with the third. If there is a good reason and they are able to prove it, accept their advise. If it is a wild accusation without any proof have a discussion. Tell them that while you do not want

to lose their friendship, it is difficult for you to accept their suggestion. You can even try to bring a rapproachement between the three.

• • •

I am eleven years old. The other day someone said that I look like a third standard student. What should I do to look my age?

- Surya Pranesh, Coimbatore

Dear Surya

Don't be discouraged. You have a lot more growth years ahead of you. Boys usually grow till the age of 18. However, since you do not look your age at present, you have to find out why. A medical check up is needed to find out if there is any problem. If everything is normal, a balanced diet and good exercise will help you grow. Yogasana, especially Sarvangasana will make you tall and handsome. Seek expert guidance in Yoga.

• • •

I fall asleep in my study hall and I am not able to concentrate. Please suggest a solution.

- V. Yeshwanth, Korukonda

Dear Yeshwanth,

If you don't understand your lessons you'll feel bored and fall asleep. Or, may be you're not having sufficient sleep at night. (Average 8 hours.) Under - nourishment may also be a reason. Also, if you over eat at lunch you'll feel sleepy. Find out the reason and rectify.

• • •

Is it good to compromise in every field of activity? Will this help me to achieve my goal?

- Lilabati Mohanta, Bilaspur

Dear Lilabati,

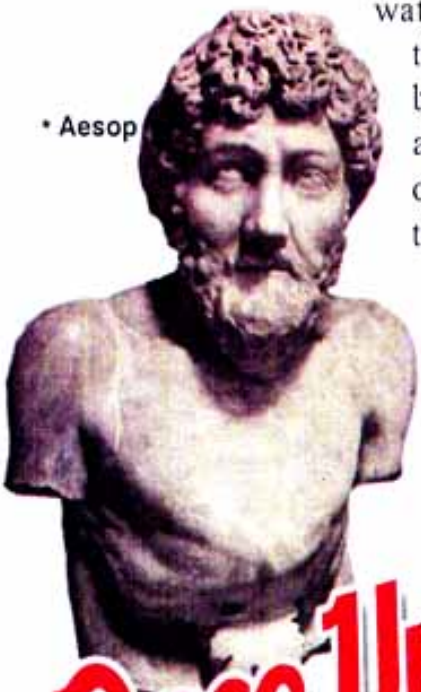
Compromises should always be selective and well reasoned. Supposing there is a quarrel between two girls over a silly matter and you suggest a compromise, it would be good if they accept and shake hands. On the other hand, imagine a situation where a girl is copying in exams and she implores you through her facial expression not to bring it to the notice of the teacher. There can be no compromise in such an event. Not speaking up when something very wrong is happening is immoral too! You have to act courageously and honestly according to your conscience.

Love

Grandmaworm

Once Upon a Time...

It all began, once upon a time... The only entertainment people had was to listen to stories, ballads and songs, much like the way we go to see films, watch concerts, etc. But then, such wandering balladeers or minstrels, also carried news from one place to another, the then newsmakers so to speak. So the people of the kingdom of Raja of XYZ, for example would receive news of what is happening in the kingdom of the Raja of ABC, through such wandering story-tellers. They were perhaps the first newscasters in the world.



• Aesop

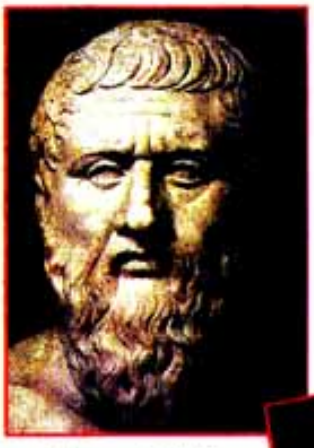
The Written Word

And then, writing came to be. Well... that is another story altogether, but in the beginning, writing was pictorial (eg: the Hieroglyphics of the Egyptians) and then came the 'Word'. Thus, we are able to cull together history from various

sandhya sridhar

ancient civilizations, thanks to the record through some form of writing. As the written word became more advanced, and each language began to evolve its own script, it became a very strong medium of communication that would become instrumental in engendering change in many fields. One outcome of the evolution of the written word in languages was that not only could history be written down, but imagination as well, in the form of poetry and fiction. Both began to be regarded as art forms because not all could write with imagination.

• Plato



• Hans Christian Anderson

• Charles Perrault

Storytellers All

Plato was one of the greatest storytellers of his time. Aesop, a slave and a master-storyteller is popular to this day. Do you remember 'The Fox and the Grapes', 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf', 'The Ant and the Grasshopper' or the most famous 'The Tortoise and the Hare'? Well, all these stories are credited to Aesop and are short stories with a moral in the end. Parents and teachers loved telling these tales to help children differentiate between what is good or right and what is wrong.

Closer home, we have Valmiki who wrote the Ramayana, and Vyasa who conceived the great body of work, the Mahabharata. The Panchantantra is a linked piece of work threading together a whole series of short stories to create a whole. The Hitopedesha, is once again a whole body of short stories. The Panchatantra is attributed to Vishnu Sharma,

while the writing of the Hitopedesha has been credited to one Narayana. These compilation of short stories are very popular and retold again and again with many variations. Tales of king Vikram and the Betaal (ghost or spirit), are also a compilation of short stories.

Short Stories

In some sense, short stories are always more popular than full length works of fiction. They are easier to read, easier to remember, re-read and re-tell as well. They begin and end quickly and you can read one story in one sitting. You do not have to remember where you left off when you pick up the book again. Some writers well-known for their short story writing in English literature are O'Henry, Edgar Allan Poe, Guy de Maupassant, P.G. Wodehouse and Anton Chekov. Very often, short stories of these famous writers began by being published in a magazine, before being compiled into a book.

Short stories are not very complex usually. They have a plot, a beginning and a quick ending. Some writers like Maupassant and O'Henry were very famous for giving what is called a 'twist in the tale'.

• Grimm Brothers

• Edgar Allan

Short Stories for Children

The popular fairy tales that we tell and retell, we read and re-read are told by very famous

writers like Hans Christian Anderson, or the Grimm Brothers; or Charles Perrault who gave the final version to Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella. Anderson and the Grimm Brothers were fairy tale collectors as well, collecting old stories and writing them out afresh, giving them a whole new value. Each of these master folk story tellers came from a different country and region. While Anderson was born in Denmark, the Brothers Grimm (Jacob and Wilhelm) were Germans. The Grimm Brothers are very famous for their stories Rumpelstiltskin, Snow White, Rapunzel and Hansel and Gretel. Hans Christian Anderson's the Little Mermaid, Ugly Duckling, the Emperor's New Clothes, the Princess and the Pea, etc are very famous. Most of us have read them at some time or the other.

• O. Henry

• P.G.Wodehouse

• Maupassant

Why the Short Story is Loved

The short story will remain a popular form of fiction writing. It is easier to read, does not take too much of your time and today, is adapted for television, for radio and as plays. And to this day, the best short story teller in my life, remains my grandmother. She can weave a tale from the most ordinary event in her life, from the funny little pot seller to the story of the cat that persisted in getting at her butter.

Do you have a story to tell? Then try your hand at writing a short story. You may never know – there may be a short story writer in you. And if you think you have written a story good enough to share, send it to us at gokulam@kalkiweekly.com. It may just find its way to print, like the many stories written by children that appear in this issue! o

• Anton Chekov

Smart Ones!

What do you call a dog in summer?

Ans: A hot dog!

If you had ten cats in a box and one jumped out, how many would be left?

Ans: None! They are all copy cats!

What happens when you ring up a bee?

Ans: You get a buzzy signal!

What did baby corn say to mom corn?

Ans: "Where is 'pop'corn?

Why did the boy throw the alarm clock out through the window?

Ans: He wanted to see time fly!

- Amulya Amar,
Std.IX, Carmel School,
Bengalooru.

LEARN TO Share, Love,

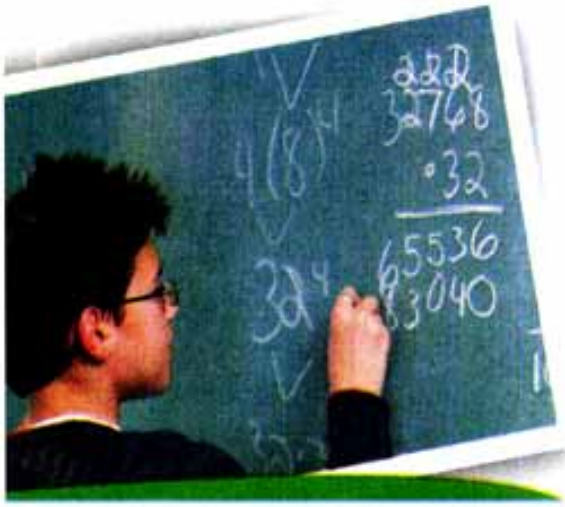
Should moral-science classes be made compulsory in schools? This was the question raised in the February 2009 issue of Gokulam. Our readers have written their well-considered views, and we publish with pride some of the best:

Moral science is not something that can be taught like mathematics or science. It has to be practiced rather than taught. The ranking should not be on the basis of exams but on the merit of the student's behaviour and attitude. If this method is followed, the subject can be made compulsory in schools, with an interesting syllabus that includes good stories.

- Aysha, Std.VII, N.N.M.C.M.School, Coimbatore

There is no need for moral science classes because it is something that has to be taught by parents at home. Instead, the school time can be spent for coaching in sports or fine arts.

- Sneha, Std.VIII, Avila Convent M.H.S.S, Coimbatore



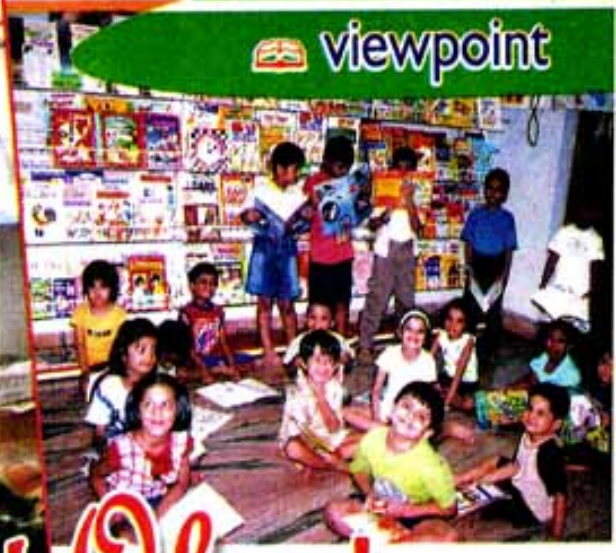
Schools can have moral science classes but they should not be imposed or made compulsory. The qualities aimed at in a moral science class ought to come from within a person, naturally.

- Anoushka Gandhi, Std.V, Delhi Public School; Lavanya.T, Std.VII, Kamala Niketan Montessori School,Trichy; Ankita J. Mamania, Std.X, J.B.Khot School No.2, Mumbai

Only if it is made compulsory and the students are evaluated through exams, will they take moral science seriously. It will then hold them back from going astray.

- Parasar H. Lenka, Std.XI, G.N.Khalsa College, Mumbai

We are already fed up with too many subjects in the



Help and Obey!

school curriculum. Why one more?

- A.Sesha Sai Kashyap, Std.IX, St.Joseph's Public School, Hyderabad

All other subjects help us to exist; it is only moral science that helps us to live. So let us start living rather than merely existing. These classes teach us how to share, how to love, how to help and how to obey. They are essential in this modern world.

- S.H.Rahul, Std.VII, Hussain Memorial School, Chennai; G.R.Swathi, Std.V, St.Joseph's Matriculation School, Sathyamangalam; J.Adikesava Siva Murugan, Std.VIII, Anitha Methodist M.H.S.S, Chennai; P. Srinisha, Std.VIII, Shrishti M.H.S.S., Vellore

To educate means to impart intellectual, moral, and social instruction – this is a dictionary definition. Every school must have moral instruction classes at least once a week.

- K.R.B.Dharanee, Std.XI, Chennai

The best time to inculcate values is during school days. Moral science classes should be compulsory.

- V.Priyadarshini, Std.VII, St.Joseph of Cluny M.H.S.S., Panruti; Sparsa Chowdary, Std.VIII, Bhashyam Public School, Vizianagaram

All the terrorism we see around us has been caused due to lack of moral values. So children like me prefer to have moral science classes

at least twice a week. Even doctors recommend these classes.

- Shreyannk. S.Kotian, Std.VI, Milagres.P.U.College, Mangalore; B.V.Induja, Std.IX, Shrishti Matriculation H.S.School, Vellore; Mythili, Std.VI, Hari Shree Vidyalayam, Chennai

So called modern education is related only to external things and little is being taught about inner values. Therefore the knowledge gained by children is not complete. Schools must play a key role in the moral development

of youth through moral science instruction. It is only in these classes that we get to learn about Buddha, Mahavira, Mahatma Gandhi, etc. Students are the backbone of the country and must be educated for all round development.

- Shiva Devi, Std.IX, Govt. Secondary School, Port Blair; Aashish, Std.X, SKCH, Bengalooru; R.Santosh Krishnan, Std.VIII, K.V., Chennai 83; S.Pooja, Std.VII, R.C.Fatima Matriculation School, Tiruvarur; A.Vasudharini, Std.III, St.Joseph of Cluny Primary School, Pondicherry; Arvind Kaushik, Std.X, Ramjas School, New Delhi

Make it 40 minutes for the younger children and 20 minutes for the older. But we must have these classes in our age of 'shoot out' incidents.

- Neha Jha, Std.XI, Ramadevi Women's College, Bhubaneswar

Schools have the responsibility of sending out into the world, good citizens who care, not only for themselves and their families, but also for their fellow human beings.

QUESTION FOR THE MONTH :

"Is it right for schools to insist that students must bring all books every day? (Instead of following the time-table)"

Send us your views by 25.04.2009. Each published entry will receive a prize of Rs. 25/-. Remember to include details of your age, class, school and residential address. Those of you who are non- residents of India should send us a local (Indian) address too. You can send entries by post or by e.mail (gokulam@kalkiweekly.com)

This is possible only if the aim of education is to build character. Moral science classes are therefore very essential.

- K.Vaishnavi, Std.VI, Gitanjali School, Hyderabad; V.Sriram, Std.IX, MES Kishora Kendra, Bengalooru; A.Aravind Sudharshan, Std.VI, Poorna Pragna Education Centre, Bengalooru

My parents and grandparents tell me that they used to have moral science classes in their school days. I am disadvantaged in this respect and have not been to such a class. I sincerely want these classes, where epics like Mahabharata, Ramayana; the Gita, The Bible, Koran, etc, are taught to us to a certain extent at least.

- J.Vijayalakshmi, Std.VI, Devi M.H.S.S., Palani

Teaching good values at a young age is like writing on a stone and will never fade.

- S.Gohula Sundar, Std.IX, T.N.P.L.M.H.S. School, Karur; A.V.Suriya Deepan, Std.X, E.S.M.H.S.School, Villupuram

These classes should be fun times for children where they can also be creative. Then there will be no need to make them compulsory because children will love to be there.

- Urja Bhuyan, Std.V, Loyola School, Bhubaneshwar

We spend most of our time in school with teachers and friends. Parents today have less time to devote for their children. It is therefore the bounden duty of schools to give us moral instruction. Teachers who handle this subject must also be examplary.

- E.Shanthi, Std.XI, Subbiah Vidyalayam Girls' H. S. School, Thoothukkudi; Sindhana Roy J, Std.X, Hebron MHSS, Nagercoil; K.V.Lilabathi Mohanta, Std.IX, St.Francis Senior Secondry School, Bilaspur; Tamanna Panda, Std.VII, Maneesh Kumar Dora,Std.IX, D.A.V. Public School, Bhubaneswar

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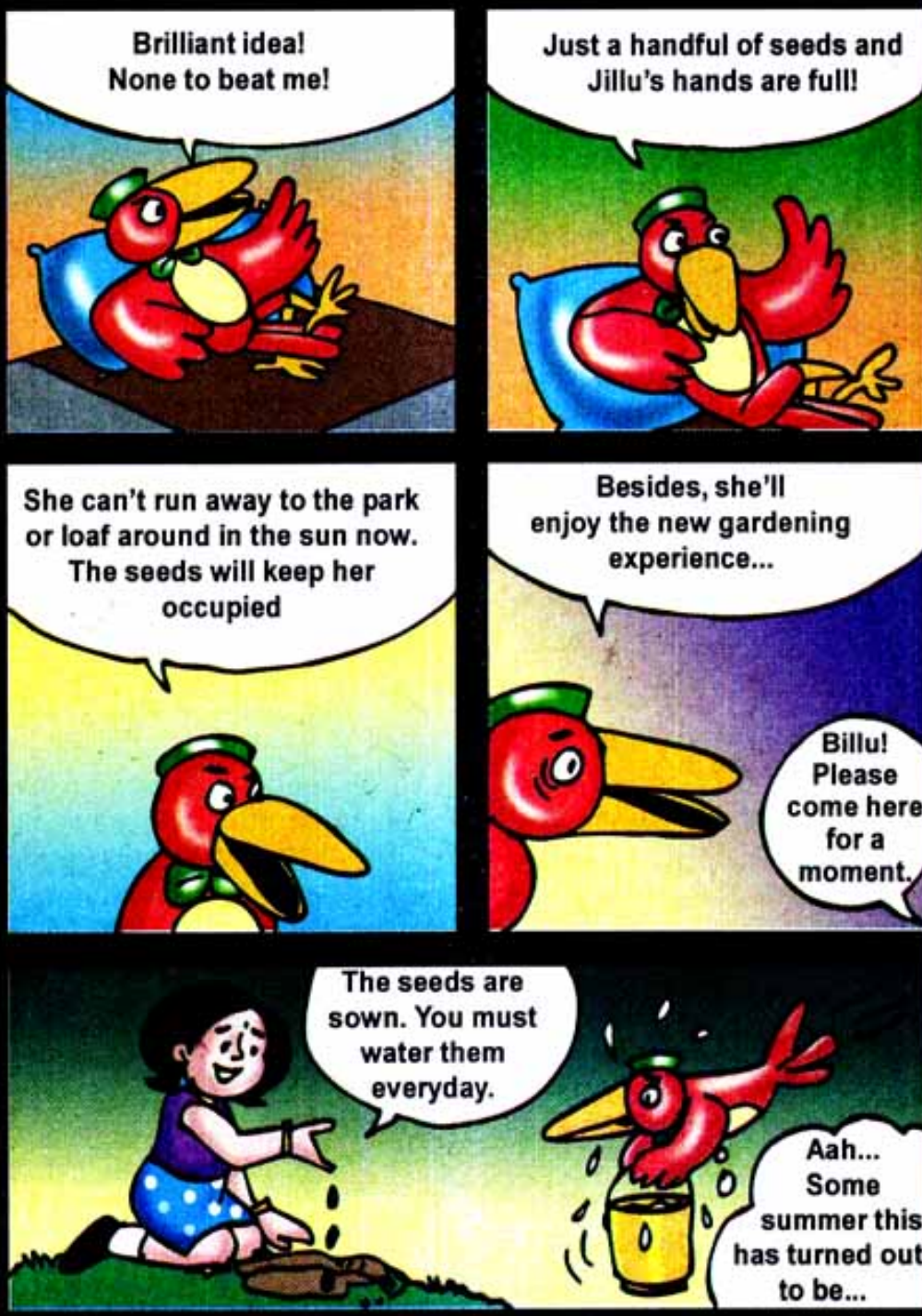

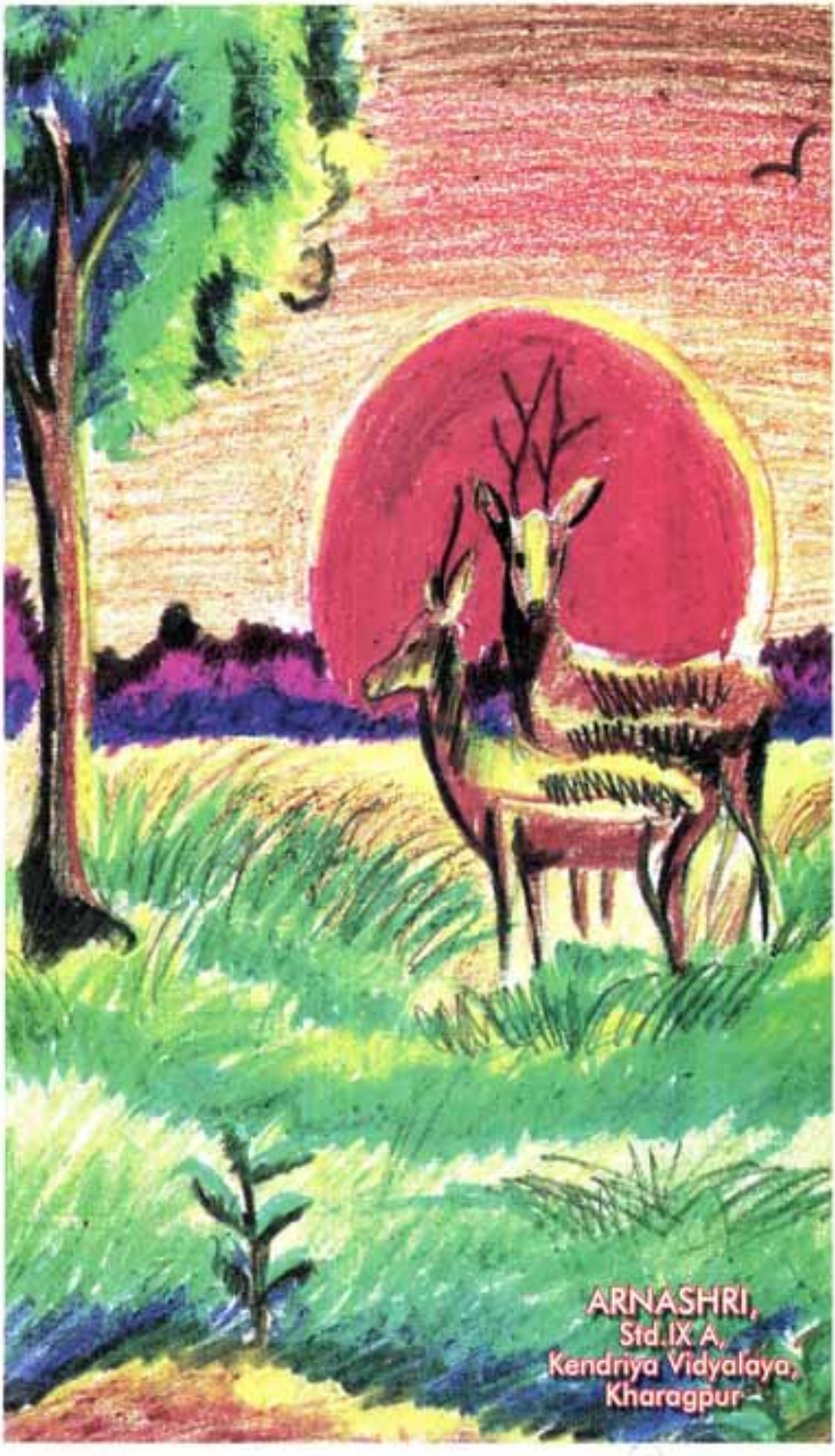
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